MONDAY
May 8, 2023

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

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INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

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Congress' Votebank Politics

Talks Openly About Separation of Karnataka from India

Double Engine Sarkara

Committed to Strong, Secure, United India

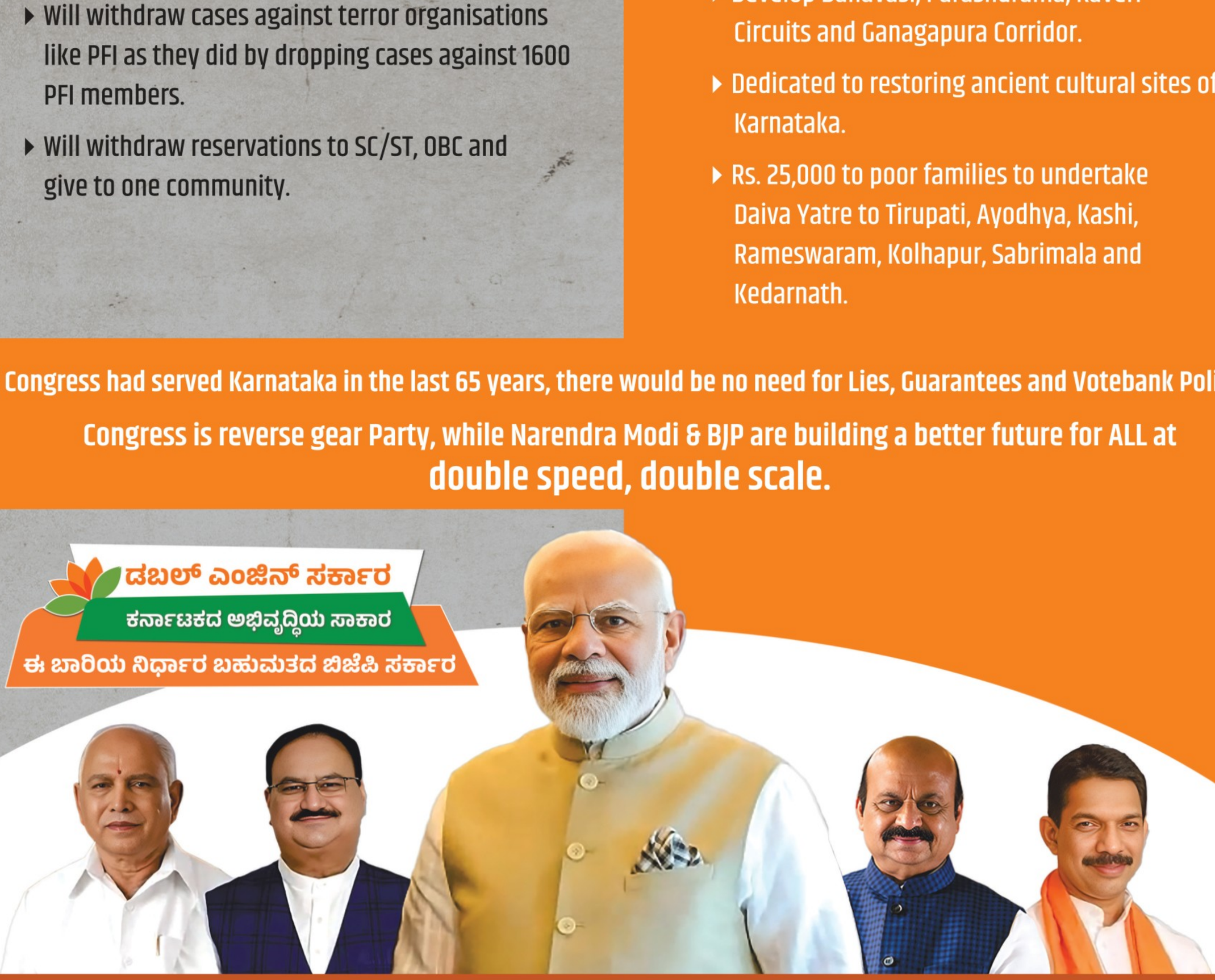
LET'S COMPARE

- Will withdraw the anti-cow slaughter law.
- Will withdraw the anti-conversion law.
- Will launch Tipu University.
- Will celebrate Tipu Jayanti.
- Will ban Bajrang Dal.
- Will withdraw cases against terror organisations like PFI as they did by dropping cases against 1600 PFI members.
- Will withdraw reservations to SC/ST, OBC and give to one community.

- Real social justice through reservations for SC/ST, OBC and EWS.
- Banning terrorist organisations like PFI.
- Uniform Civil Code in Karnataka and ensure gender justice and equal rights to all.
- Develop Banavasi, Parashurama, Kaveri Circuits and Ganagapura Corridor.
- Dedicated to restoring ancient cultural sites of Karnataka.
- Rs. 25,000 to poor families to undertake Daiva Yatre to Tirupati, Ayodhya, Kashi, Rameswaram, Kolhapur, Sabrimala and Kedarnath.

If Congress had served Karnataka in the last 65 years, there would be no need for Lies, Guarantees and Votebank Politics.

Congress is reverse gear Party, while Narendra Modi & BJP are building a better future for ALL at **double speed, double scale.**



Published by BJP, Karnataka

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JULY 18 DEADLINE

Probe agencies should install CCTV cameras

NEWS » PAGE 11

SOUMYA SWAMINATHAN

'We have not reached end of pandemic'

NEWS » PAGE 11

GOODS TRADE

Data rejigs drag down export-import tally

NEWS » PAGE 10

DATA POINT

Divorce as the only resort

A high share of divorced women faced sexual abuse: NFHS survey

OPINION » PAGE 9

INCREDIBLE FINISH

Phillips, Samad help Sunrisers pip Royals

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

EC notice irks Congress

BENGALURU
A day after the Election Commission sought evidence from Karnataka Congress over its "corruption rate card" advertisements targeting the BJP, the party on Sunday accused the EC of subjecting it to "unfair and unequal treatment." » Page 6

Modi winds up his campaign

BENGALURU
Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed off his high-voltage campaign for the Assembly elections in Karnataka with a roadshow in Bengaluru, and two public rallies at Aynur in Shivamogga and at Nanjangud in Mysuru district, on Sunday.

» Page 4

Caught in a conflict: People from the violence-hit areas of Manipur gather at a relief camp in Cachar district of Assam on Sunday. PTI

Manipur remains tense as thousands flee to safer areas

Rahul Karmakar
Vijaita Singh
GUWAHATI/NEW DELHI

An uneasy calm prevailed in Manipur on Sunday, four days after the State spiralled into ethnic violence, with thousands either taking refuge in neighbouring northeastern States or being evacuated from conflict zones by their respective governments.

Though there were some curfew relaxations as the situation improved, it was decided not to restore mobile Internet in the State, Manipur's newly appointed security adviser Kuldiep Singh told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Singh put the tentative death toll at 37, as on Sunday, cautioning that the administration was verifying whether all deaths were due to the violence or not. The unofficial death toll, based on hospital body counts, has crossed 50.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

22 drown, many missing in boat tragedy in Kerala

Boat capsized in estuary in Malappuram; children among victims; death toll likely to go up as several are missing; local people say there were 50 people on the boat that had a capacity of 25

The Hindu Bureau
MALAPPURAM

Twenty-two people drowned when a tourist boat capsized in the Poorapuzha estuary in Malappuram district of Kerala on Sunday. The death toll is likely to go up as several passengers are missing.

Many of the victims were women and children. Most of them were from families from neighbouring places. The tragedy took place at Ottumpuram Thoovaltheeram, between Tanur and Parappanangadi, around 7 p.m.

Eyewitnesses said there were nearly 50 people on the boat, which had a capacity of 25. The overcrowding made the boat list before it capsized, they said. Many passengers were caught under the boat, and the darkness hampered the rescue.

Frantic search: Rescue operation under way in Malappuram district on Sunday. SAKEER HUSSAIN

Many of the rescued passengers are in a critical condition. They were rushed to hospitals at Tanur, Tirur, Parappanangadi, Tirurangadi, Kottakkal, Manjeri and Kozhikode.

The boat named *Shinkara*, owned by Nazar Pattarakath from Tanur, had violated the rules.

It conducted a service late in the evening because of the heavy rush of tourists.

Kerala Health Minister Veena George issued a directive to medical colleges and government hospitals in Malappuram to deploy additional staff. Government doctors have been deployed in private hospitals to attend to the emergency.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Results of SSLC exam to be out today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

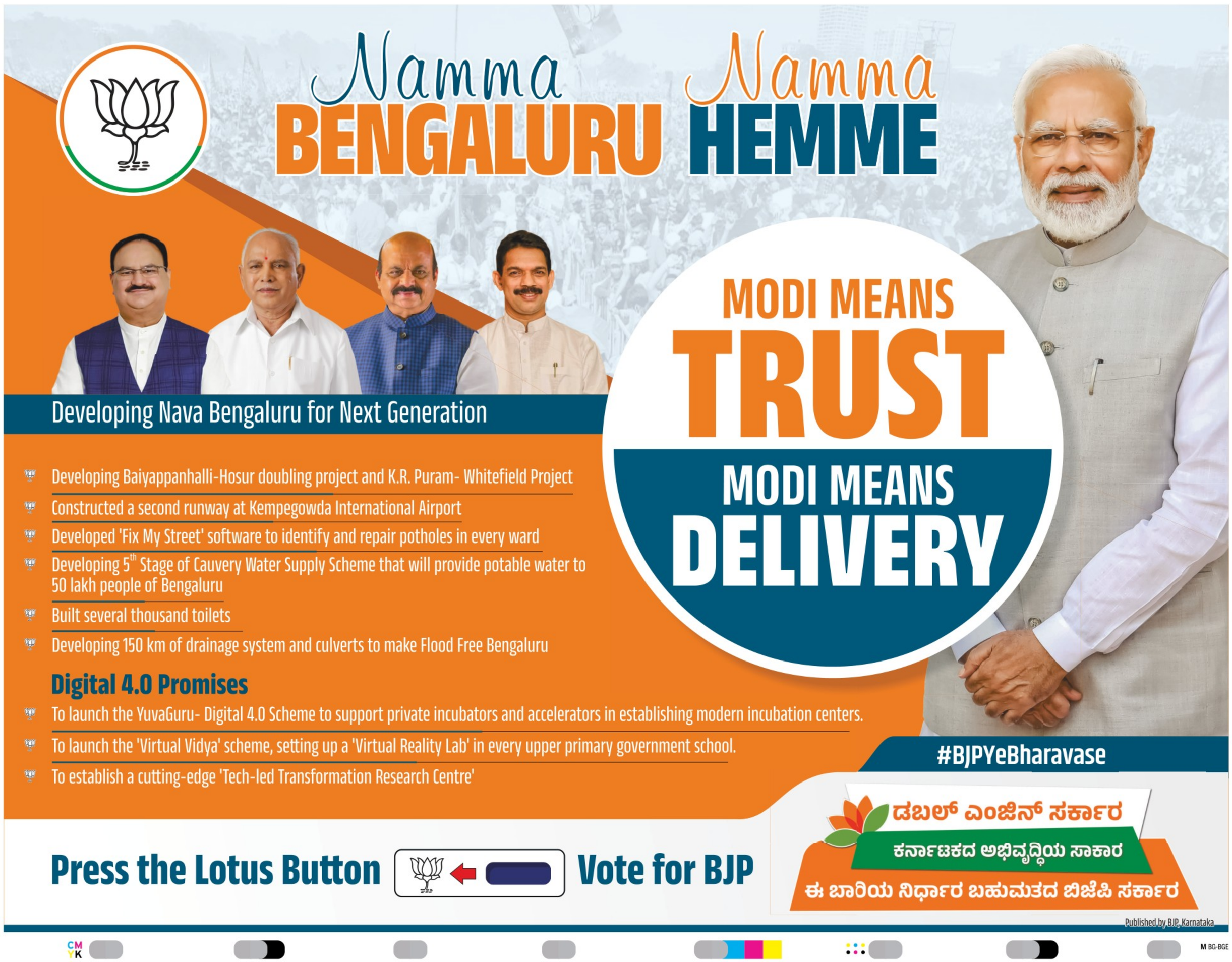
The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) will announce the SSLC results on Monday at 10 a.m.

The result will be available to students on the website https://karresults.nic.in at 11 a.m.

Via SMS
Simultaneously, the board will also send the results to the registered mobile numbers of students through SMS. The KSEAB successfully conducted the examination from March 31 to April 15 across the State and around 8.42 lakh students appeared for it.

Evaluation
The evaluation was held from April 24 to May 5. The board had deputed around 63,000 evaluators for assessing answer scripts this year.

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5


Namma BENGALURU
Namma HEMME
MODI MEANS TRUST
MODI MEANS DELIVERY
Developing Nava Bengaluru for Next Generation
Developing Baiyappanhalli-Hosur doubling project and K.R. Puram- Whitefield Project
Constructed a second runway at Kempegowda International Airport
Developed 'Fix My Street' software to identify and repair potholes in every ward
Developing 5th Stage of Cauvery Water Supply Scheme that will provide potable water to 50 lakh people of Bengaluru
Built several thousand toilets
Developing 150 km of drainage system and culverts to make Flood Free Bengaluru
Digital 4.0 Promises
To launch the YuvaGuru- Digital 4.0 Scheme to support private incubators and accelerators in establishing modern incubation centers.
To launch the 'Virtual Vidya' scheme, setting up a 'Virtual Reality Lab' in every upper primary government school.
To establish a cutting-edge 'Tech-led Transformation Research Centre'
#BJPYeBharavase
Press the Lotus Button
Vote for BJP
ಡಬಲ್ ಎಂಜಿನ್ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಯ ಸಾಕಾರ
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Published by BJP, Karnataka

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of MPs removed from Parliament since 1988

42 The maximum number of memberships were lost in the 14th Lok Sabha witnessing the ouster of 19 lawmakers in connection with the cash-for-query scam and cross-voting. Rahul Gandhi was one among the recently disqualified members. PTI

The fall in sales of coolers in April, expecting a rise in May

15 In percentage. Unseasonal rains in north India during April-end and May beginning have put the brakes on the sales of cooling products such as ACs, refrigerators and coolers, according to the Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association. PTI

Record runs amassed by Virat Kohli, the first in IPL history

7,000 runs. Playing his 233rd match since the inception of the Indian Premier League, Kolhi became the first to touch this milestone in the match between Royal Challengers vs Delhi Capitals on May 6. PTI

The number of people who have fled violence in northeast India

23,000 people. The Indian Army informed that the violence that reportedly killed at least 54, has resulted in many fleeing the region. In Manipur, houses were set on fire. AFP

The fatalities in the flash floods and landslides in Congo

394 While close to 400 people were killed, many more were missing in the floods that have affected Congo. Heavy rains have brought misery to thousands in East Africa. AGENCIES

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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India's first national water-body census

What is the importance of a water-body census? How has the census thrown light on rainfall patterns? What are some of the shortcomings with respect to the data collected? Does the data give insight into natural ecosystems and how water bodies sustain them?

EXPLAINER

Veena Srinivasan

The story so far:
The findings of the first-ever water body census, conducted by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, was published recently.

Why is a water body census necessary?
India is facing a water crisis with groundwater decline, biodiversity loss, and climate change increasing the frequency of floods and droughts. In this context, water bodies are important. They buffer against climate variability, holding flood waters for use in dry periods. They contribute to food and water security as well as livelihoods by recharging groundwater and providing water for irrigation and livestock. They also have cultural and ecological significance. However, water bodies are increasingly under threat from pollution, encroachment, urbanisation, and drying. If they are to be conserved and managed effectively, we need action plans which require baseline data. As water bodies are managed by different agencies from State to local to private entities, the data must be uniform and easily accessible. To actually manage water bodies, we need contextual and traditional knowledge of communities which are to be integrated with formal data. While data on reservoirs and rivers has been available on the India Water Resources Information System (WRIS) for the last few years, there has been no data on smaller water bodies that are the lifeline of rural India and critical cultural, flood-control and recreational spaces in cities.

How was the census conducted?
The massive effort expended in the first-ever water body census was much needed. The census's objective was to develop a national database with information on the size, purpose, ownership, status, and conditions of water bodies. It covered all natural and human-made units bounded on all sides for storing water, irrespective of condition or use.

A software for data entry and a mobile app for capturing the location and visual of the water bodies were developed, and data-processing workshops were conducted to train the surveyors in all States and Union territories.

The census was built on existing and publicly available satellite-derived datasets. These datasets are extremely rich, allowing citizens to hone in on a specific village and download the historical time series data on each water body. However, they only include attributes that can be observed from space. The water body census thus, extends this to social characteristics including ownership, use and condition.

What does the data show?
Such a large national effort allows us to compare spatial and temporal trends of water bodies across the country. These are some of the observations based on the data:-

(a) Most water bodies in the country are very small – the vast majority of India's water bodies are less than one hectare (ha) large. This means locating and keeping track of them is likely to remain a challenge. The traditional way to map these water bodies, using satellites, may not work, which is why the mammoth effort expended in ground-based tracking is very welcome.

(b) The water bodies show regional patterns that correlate with rainfall – in general, in drier States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan, water bodies tend to be larger and publicly held. In the wetter parts of the country, like Kerala, West Bengal, and States in the northeast, more than three-quarters of the water bodies are privately owned. In drier States, the water bodies are primarily used for irrigation and groundwater recharge while in wetter States, domestic use and pisciculture dominate. Mid-sized water bodies are largely panchayat-owned.

(c) Most water bodies have never been repaired or rejuvenated – several water bodies were classified "not in use", meaning despite the recent interest in rejuvenating water bodies, most of them have never been repaired or revived.

How can the census improve?
While the census was a clearly Herculean effort, we must take care when interpreting the data.

First, there are some clear gaps. Water bodies have an important role in supporting biodiversity. They harbour fish that birds feed on and provide roosting and breeding spaces for resident and migratory birds. These ecological functions are related to the size and location of the water bodies. But the latest water body census does not address any questions about this. The report itself noted in its preamble that water bodies "support healthy ecosystems", yet the focus was exclusively on human use, which means only pisciculture or fish farming, which is seeded and does not reflect natural biodiversity.

In classifying water bodies in terms of reasons of abandonment or disuse, "others" emerged as a significant reason, on par with "drying up" in a few States, but far ahead of other specific categories such as industrial pollution, construction, and salinity. One possibility is that the census questionnaire may have left out the most common reasons like eutrophication, sewage pollution, and solid waste dumping.

Secondly, there are inconsistencies in the census. The census groups water bodies into five types: ponds, tanks, lakes, reservoirs, and water conservation schemes. Its glossary defines a pond as a smaller water body than a tank, while "water conservation structures" might include check dams and percolation tanks. However, these categories are not mutually exclusive – many tanks that were traditionally used directly for irrigation serve primarily as recharge structures today. Based on the data, it appears that in Karnataka, these were classified as ponds and tanks serving the purpose of irrigation, whereas in Maharashtra these were classified as water conservation structures, primarily serving the purpose of groundwater recharge. The sources of irrigation statistics for the two States suggest neither State has much tank irrigation.

Third, the data was not standardised across States. Some States like Gujarat do not show any water bodies not being in use, whereas Karnataka reports almost 80% of its water bodies as being in a state of disuse. This suggests differences in interpretation by the enumerators.

There are some other concerns as well. For example, the map for north Karnataka seems suspiciously empty. Since the original geotagged data does not seem to have been made available yet, it is unclear if some districts were skipped or if they genuinely had a lower water-body density.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, it is crucial that the government continue such nationwide censuses of a vital resource, with modifications. This first edition itself provides high-level indications on the way forward by detailing ownership, state of use, and the costs of construction and repair. It points to how and why water bodies must be restored, which agency's capacities need to be strengthened, where and how much funds are needed, and who will benefit from such efforts. If such censuses are conducted every five or 10 years, over time, they will accurately represent emerging trends and the state of water in the country as a whole.

Dr. Veena Srinivasan is the Executive Director of the Water, Environment, Land and Livelihoods (WELL) Labs, a research centre based at the Institute of Financial Management and Research (IFMR) Society and Krea University.

Monitoring waters: A fisherman casts his net at Madhure Kere lake on the outskirts of Bengaluru on April 1. AFP

THE GIST

- India is facing a water crisis with groundwater decline, biodiversity loss, and climate change increasing the frequency of floods and droughts. In this context, water bodies are important.
- The first water-body census's objective was to develop a national database with information on the size, purpose, ownership, status, and conditions of water bodies. It covered all natural and human-made units bounded on all sides for storing water, irrespective of condition or use.
- The first edition itself provides high-level indications on the ways forward by detailing ownership, state of use, and the costs of construction and repair.

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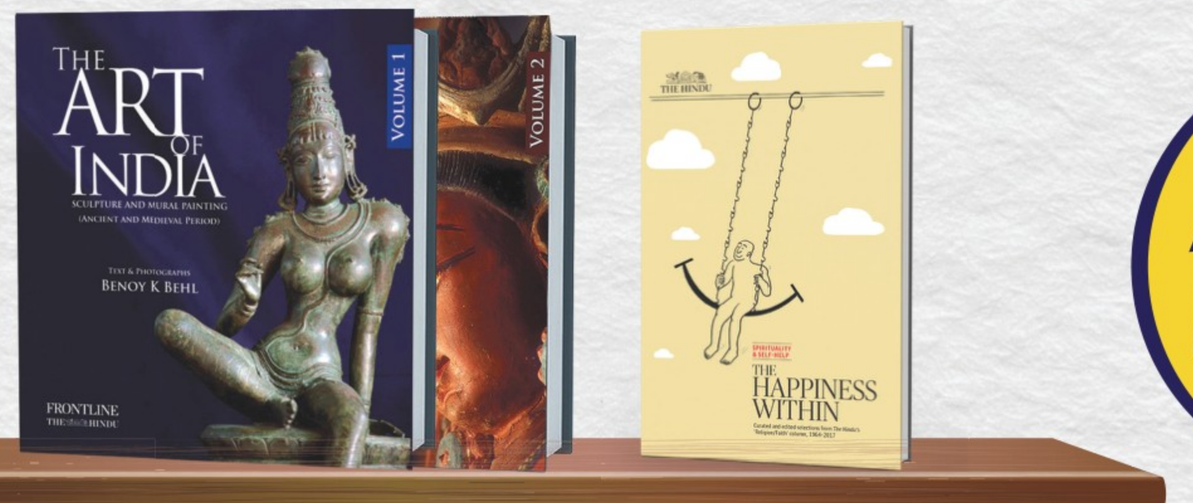

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Civic issues plague the IT corridor

Many areas in Mahadevapura and K.R. Puram constituencies were flooded during the rains in 2022, drawing the ire of voters; citizens seek preventive measures to tackle flooding and the overflowing of lakes

KEY CONSTITUENCY

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The Information Technology (IT) corridor of the city, spread over Mahadevapura and K.R. Puram Assembly constituencies, were in the headlines for the wrong reasons recently.

Many pockets of these constituencies were flooded during heavy rains in 2022, drawing the ire of voters. So much so that the Bharatiya Janata Party denied ticket to its incumbent MLA in Mahadevapura, Arvind Limbavali, who won thrice since 2008, and instead fielded his wife. He is the only incumbent MLA from the city the BJP denied a ticket to.

While citizens demand preventive measures to tackle flooding and overflowing lakes, floods dominate the discourse during these elections. Million Voters Rising, a citizen's manifesto for Mahadevapura, for instance, diagnoses the problem as a local governance deficit and demands a separate municipal body for Mahadevapura.

Meanwhile, both Mahadevapura and K. R. Puram suffers from traffic snarls and drinking water problems. Large parts of Mahadevapura are yet to be serviced by piped water and residents here are dependent on borewells and water tankers.

In areas like Garudacharpalya, Hoodi and Hagadur, people spend ₹2,000 to ₹4,000 a month on private water tankers. "The present MLA has promised that the Cauvery V Stage will be completed soon and we will get water, but the wait is on," said Shivashankar, a resident of Hoodi.

A file photo of a NDRF team evacuating residents at Rainbow Drive on the flooded Sarjapur Road, after heavy rains in Bengaluru.

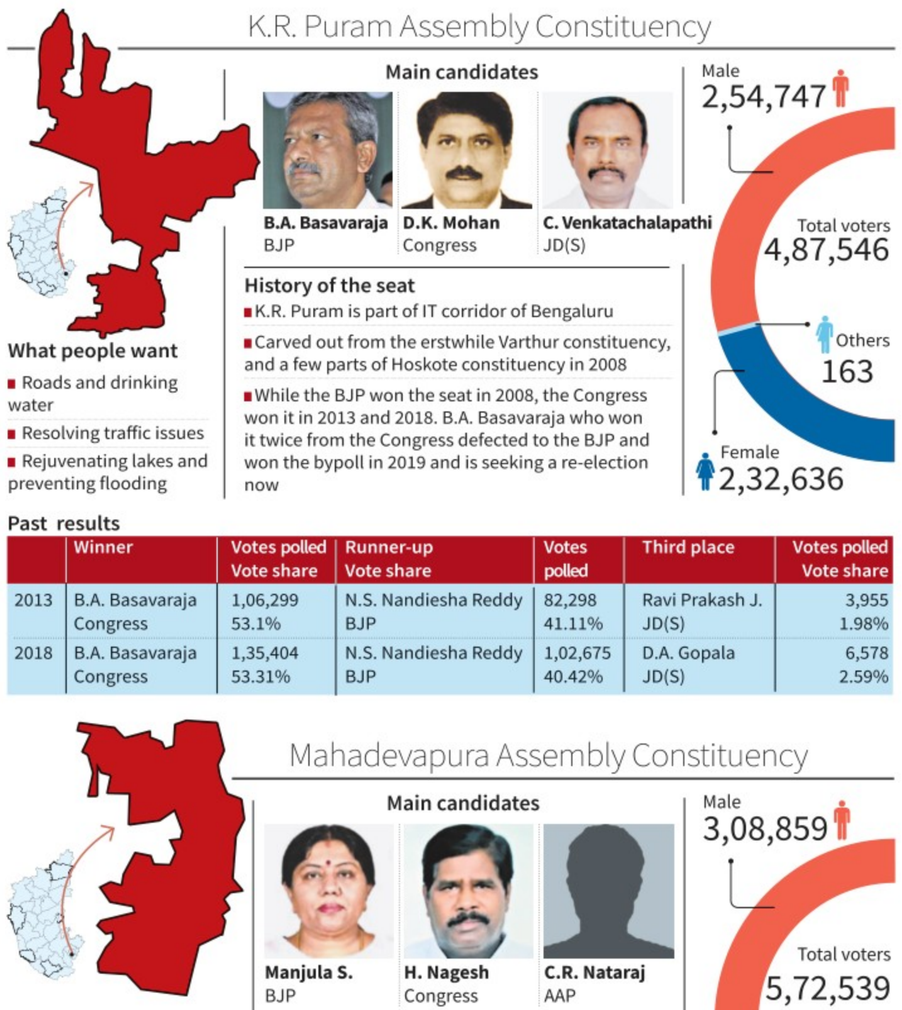
As seen in many parts of the city, traffic is a major issue in both these constituencies. Despite the newly opened metro line, it doesn't connect these parts with the rest of the network as the works are incomplete.

"White-topping work, incomplete metro connectivity, and poor traffic management has led to traffic snarls," said Pradeep Kumar, a resident of K.R. Puram. Apart from this, garbage and drinking water issues persist, he added.

Both Mahadevapura and K. R. Puram are burgeoning areas with a large influx of job-seeking migrants coming into the city. "The population has grown exponentially over the last few years straining the civic infrastructure. So the infrastructure needs a leg up," said Basavaraj, a resident of K.R. Puram. He also added that there were several instances of chain-snatching and mugging, making roads unsafe.

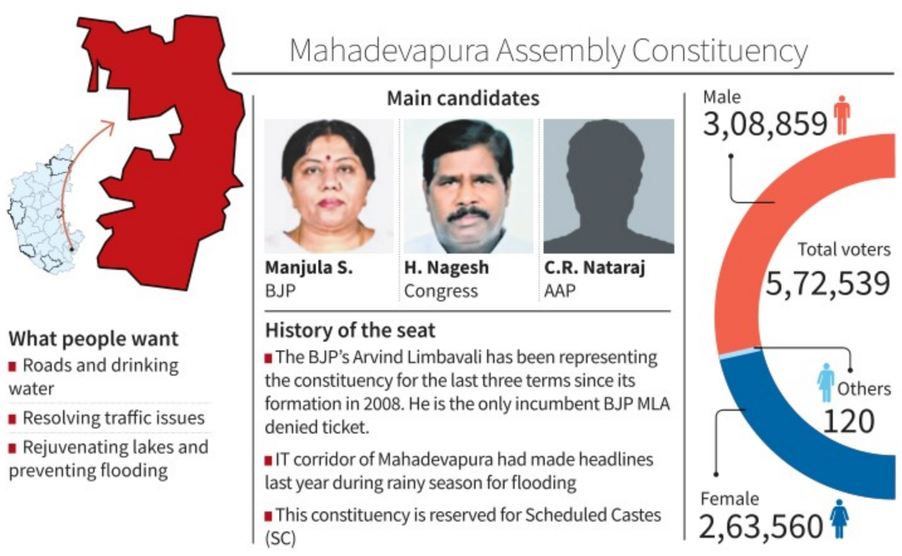
B.A. Basavaraja, the incumbent MLA in K.R. Puram, won the seat twice from the Congress in 2013 and 2018. He defected to the BJP in 2019 as part of Operation Kamala. He won the bypoll and is seeking a re-election from the BJP.

The Congress has fielded D.K. Mohan, Chairman, Cambridge Group of Institutions, an education group in the area. Meanwhile, the BJP that denied ticket to its three-time MLA Arvind Limbavali has fielded his wife S. Manjula, even as the Congress has fielded incumbent Mulabagal MLA H. Nagesh from the seat.


K.R. Puram Assembly Constituency
Main candidates
B.A. Basavaraja
BJP
D.K. Mohan
Congress
C. Venkatachalapathi
JD(S)
What people want
Roads and drinking water
Resolving traffic issues
Rejuvenating lakes and preventing flooding
History of the seat
K.R. Puram is part of IT corridor of Bengaluru
Carved out from the erstwhile Varthur constituency, and a few parts of Hoskote constituency in 2008
While the BJP won the seat in 2008, the Congress won it in 2013 and 2018. B.A. Basavaraja who won it twice from the Congress defected to the BJP and won the bypoll in 2019 and is seeking a re-election now
Male
2,54,747
Total voters
4,87,546
Others
163
Female
2,32,636

Past results

	Winner	Votes polled / Vote share	Runner-up / Vote share	Votes polled	Third place	Votes polled / Vote share
2013	B.A. Basavaraja Congress	1,06,299 53.1%	N.S. Nandiesha Reddy BJP	82,298 41.11%	Ravi Prakash J. JD(S)	3,955 1.98%
2018	B.A. Basavaraja Congress	1,35,404 53.31%	N.S. Nandiesha Reddy BJP	1,02,675 40.42%	D.A. Gopala JD(S)	6,578 2.59%



Past results

	Winner	Votes polled / Vote share	Runner-up / Vote share	Votes polled	Third place	Votes polled / Vote share
2013	Arvind Limbavali BJP	1,10,244 48.62%	A.C. Srinivas Congress	1,04,095 45.91%	N. Govardhan Congress	5,604 2.47%
2018	Arvind Limbavali BJP	141,682 49.83%	A.C. Srinivas Congress	1,23,898 43.57%	Sathish K. JD(S)	6,391 2.25%

Elephant Balarama of Mysuru Dasara fame passes away

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

A file photo of elephant Balarama on the palace premises in Mysuru.

Majestic in appearance and calm in disposition were the hallmarks of elephant Balarama of Mysuru Dasara fame, who passed away on Sunday, after a prolonged illness.

He was 67 years and was battling what is suspected to be tuberculosis and died at around 4.30 p.m. at Bhimanakatte elephant camp in Hunsur range.

Though the forest department had identified his discomfiture about three weeks ago, the treatment for suspected TB began about a fortnight ago and the blood samples were sent to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute at Izatnagar, Bareilly for analysis and the report was awaited, according to B.N.N. Murthy, Conservator of Forests, Kodagu Circle.

Measuring 2.7 meters in height and 3.7 meters in length, Balarama was captured in the Kattepura forests near Somwarpet of Kodagu in 1987. Given his broad and flat back, strength and calm demeanour, he was instantly recognised as fit to be a ceremonial elephant and was drafted to take part in Mysuru Dasara.

After the tragic death of legendary elephant Drona which was electrocuted in the Nagarahole forests in 1998, Balarama stepped into his shoes to carry the 750 kg golden howdah and the idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari during the Dasara procession for the first time in 1999.

He ended up carrying the golden howdah 13 times in a row and his last appearance as the "Ambari Aane" or the howdah elephant was in 2011 after which he was retired from services as per government rules, at the age of 60.

Text & Context

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (May 8, Monday), the following explainer is available:

- What did India's first national water-body census find? **bit.ly/waterbodycensus**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access this article. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

'My priority will be houses for people still living in slums'

Uday B. Garudachar, Chickpet MLA, says an effective full term could have made a huge difference to what could be achieved

INTERVIEW

Uday Garudachar

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Uday Garudachar

Chickpet is a diverse constituency, comprising elite and upper middle class pockets as well as lower-middle class areas with a large population of slum dwellers.

Although a challenge, the needs of everyone were successfully met during his tenure, but more things remain to be done, says Uday Garudachar, the MLA of Chickpet constituency.

Excerpts from an interview with *The Hindu*:

What are some of the key things you have accomplished as the MLA of Chickpet constituency in the last five years?

Good infrastructure is something that everyone wants irrespective of social, economic or educational background. Therefore, infrastructure has always been my key focus area. Chickpet is in the CBD of Bengaluru. Roads were in absolute distress and drainage was atrocious when I took over. Drainage pipes were laid 40 years ago when the city's population was very less.

Hundreds of old bungalows have become apartments, housing 40-50 people instead of just four-six people. I requested the Chief Minister for funds and some ₹30 crore was granted. We could relay sewage pipes in around 70% of Chickpet area. We also built 700 to 800 small flats for people who were living in slums in Chickpet.

How much investment have you brought to your constituency in this period?

I managed to get approximately ₹250 crore for my constituency. Most of it was directed towards infrastructure. However, you should remember one thing, we lost our first year sitting in the Opposition. Next two years, we were under the shadow of the pandemic. Whatever we accomplished was during the fourth year and until now. An effective full term could have made a huge difference to my tenure.

What will be your priorities if you are able to retain this seat?

If I get a chance to come back as MLA, my priority will be building the remaining houses for people still living in slums in Chickpet area. They don't have washrooms. It is really painful to see young and old women queuing up in front of public toilets for hours. They all should have their own homes and independent toilets, which are basic needs.

Fortunately, K100 (a project aimed at rejuvenating the stormwater drain network between Majestic and Bellandur Lake) is passing through many wards in my constituency. Lighting is another priority area. Certain parts of my constituency are not adequately lit. While main roads are, some ancillary roads have no proper lights.

Have you touched the lives of all slum dwellers in Chickpet yet?

We built almost 800 dwelling places and made a difference to the lives of many. However, my constituency has 32 slums and a large number of people.

We are planning to build G+2 apartments for them with their own washrooms and Cauvery water connection. I will pressure the government to support this project further as Chickpet is the epicentre of the city's trade.

We will focus on the training and employment of slum dwellers and the youth. We will also encourage shops, establishments and entrepreneurs to offer them jobs. We want to enhance their standard of living, improve their lifestyle and incomes.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAY. 08	
RISE 05:57	SET 18:36
RISE 21:23	SET 07:55
TUESDAY, MAY. 09	
RISE 05:56	SET 18:36
RISE 22:26	SET 08:55
WEDNESDAY, MAY. 10	
RISE 05:56	SET 18:36
RISE 23:26	SET 09:58

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	33	25
Mysuru	32	22
Bengaluru	29	22

Bengaluru Today
30°C The weather will be slight warm and humid. Spell of moderate rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm and humid. Few spells of moderate rain and thundershower to occur.

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CACHE

REUTERS

What is Bluesky, the latest micro-blogging platform in the market?

Are Twitter users searching for alternative social media platforms? Could Bluesky be the company that takes Twitter's place? How does the latest social media website function? Why is membership to the platform restricted?

Sahana Venugopal

Since Elon Musk's takeover, Twitter has been constantly in the news. The social media company's workforce has dropped from nearly 8,000 to around 1,000. Alongside the drop, technical glitches and outages have increased. Separately, as the blue tick verification and API access become paid features, several users are searching for alternative social media platforms. Though the decentralised Mastodon emerged as an early contender, Bluesky has come to the fore as a potential claimant to Twitter's throne.

What is Bluesky?
Bluesky is a micro-blogging platform and social website built on the AT Protocol (Authenticated Transport Protocol). Bluesky might be classified as a Twitter competitor due to its founding team but it is different in terms of its structure, as it is meant to form part of a decentralised ecosystem. Users of apps built on the AT Protocol would be able to move between platforms without losing their followers, media, work, and data. This account portability, as the feature is called, is a major part of the AT Protocol's structure.

Bluesky says its founding mission is to "develop and drive large-scale adoption of technologies for open and decentralised public conversation."

Who is behind Bluesky?
The CEO of Bluesky is Jay Graber, a software engineer with a background in cryptocurrency. Bluesky was launched in 2019 by former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, who chose Ms. Graber to lead the project. Twitter and Bluesky were meant to eventually connect and work with each other, but the companies ended their service agreement last year. Since then, Mr. Dorsey has admitted that mistakes were made in how Twitter handled certain content moderation debates.

Could Bluesky replace Twitter?
Not anytime soon. Bluesky is currently in private beta, meaning that only a select group has been allowed to join via invite codes. Others interested in trying it out can add themselves to a waitlist. Regular Bluesky members are also given a new invite code at periodic intervals that they can share with new applicants they deem trustworthy.

Bluesky said it had more than 50,000 users at the end of April but maintained that it would distribute invites at its own discretion to maintain the integrity of the platform. Based on this announcement, it is unlikely that Bluesky will replace Twitter any time soon, as it continues to grow its membership at a highly controlled rate.

What is it like on Bluesky?
Screenshots of Bluesky profiles retweeted by its CEO show a user interface similar to Twitter, with options to comment, share, or "heart" posts.

Celebrity users appear to be seeing fewer "likes" and "shares" when compared to their Twitter platforms, due to the smaller number of participants on Bluesky. Platform users also have the ability to set their domains as their handle, making it easier to link their accounts across ecosystems, and authenticate their identity.

While Bluesky aims to achieve a more decentralised structure, it is currently being regulated by an official team and is hosted on a single server, according to tech outlet *The Verge*.

How will content be moderated?
The new social media platform has defended its invite code sign-up process, claiming that it is easier to restrict sign-ups than clean up network abuse after quickly letting in a large number of users. On its website, Bluesky says that it will follow automated filtering, manual admin actions, and community labelling to moderate content. Users will be able to add labels to posts based on their own values, and other users can also adopt these, if they wish to do so.

Even so, Bluesky encountered one of its first challenges with content moderation when users targeting the posts of a controversial Bluesky member discovered that the block function was not yet available. This was later added. Users spreading hate or bullying others have been banned from the platform.

How is Bluesky different from Mastodon?
While Bluesky and Mastodon both strive to be decentralised social media platforms, Bluesky is still highly controlled by its team of creators, and entry is based on an invite code. On the other hand, Mastodon has multiple servers that users can join or apply to join, making it less controlled in terms of entry. Mastodon is also older, going back to 2016. Its servers saw over 2.5 million active users late last year and its popularity surged after Twitter came under Mr. Musk's leadership. However, Mastodon's active users soon dropped to less than two million, reported *The Guardian*. Complaints included the fact that Mastodon's multiple server structure confused users, and that it lacked a significant user base. Meanwhile, Bluesky is newer and opting for a more regimented release of its product.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Today's quiz is about herd mentality, the concept social psychologists use to explain people's behaviour in groups

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
Social proof is a phenomenon in which people use the judgment of others to define their reality. Some TV producers took advantage of this to introduce _____ _____ to make their TV shows seem funnier. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2
Researchers have argued that _____ _____ caused more people to participate in two of history's worst genocides, the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide, using a combination of social incentives and punishments. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3
Laws need to be specific. When they're vague, they can have a _____ _____: people being afraid to, say, speak their mind because they are uncertain whether they could run afoul of the law. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 4
_____ have been known to use communal reinforcement to ensure members of their groups stay dedicated to their brutal tasks and not leave in fear. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5
Many 'pump and dump' investment schemes involving cryptocurrencies played on a feeling people have, that they might be missing an important opportunity, to inflate their own profits. Name the feeling.

Visual question:
Identify these two individuals and their connection.

Questions and Answers to the May 5 edition of the daily quiz: 1. This chess GM was briefly world champion in the 1960s. His innovative and aggressive style set him apart. **Ans: Mikhail Tal**
2. The former chess world champion Mikhail Botvinnik said this, "In the hands of this young man lies the future of chess," about this player. **Ans: Garry Kasparov**
3. This GM coached the outstanding Indian chess talent Arjun Erigaisi recently. **Ans: Rustam Kazimdzhanov**
4. This world champion was once unbeaten for eight years from 10 February 1916 to 21 March 1924. **Ans: Jose Raul Capablanca**
5. This chess world champion was also an electrical engineer, who once won the Order of Badge of Honour for his work on power stations in the Ural mountains in Russia. **Ans: Mikhail Botvinnik**
Visual: Name the two players in the picture from a practice game at Moscow in June 1958. **Ans: Bobby Fischer, Tigran Petrosian**
Early Bird: Guruvayoorappan Krishnan

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He gets easily angry at everyone

I always feel like I am walking on eggshells around him. My friends also think the same

S. Upendran

"Come on in! Did you manage to meet your friend who had the surgery?"
"Yes, but he was surrounded by his family members. We couldn't really talk."
"Well, if the family members were present, it must have been difficult to carry on a conversation. The two of you must have been walking on eggshells"
"Walking on eggshells? Why would I walk on eggshells?"
"Walking on eggshells is an idiom mostly used in informal contexts. When you walk on eggshells, you are being extra careful about what you say and how you behave. You do this because..."
"You probably do this because you don't want to upset the person you're talking to. The individual probably has a bad temper."
"Or it could be the person is very sensitive, and therefore gets upset easily. As a result, you try to be as diplomatic as possible. Here's an example. I always feel that I'm walking on eggshells when I'm around my new boss."
"My uncle is very short tempered. So, whenever he visits us, all of us at home are walking on eggshells."
"Good example! Did you win the match you played yesterday?"
"No, we lost. I dropped a very simple catch in the last over. So, everyone was angry on me."
"You never say 'angry on'. If you are upset with someone, you are 'angry with' the person."
"You can also be 'angry at' something, right?"
"That's right! You can be 'angry with someone' or 'angry at something'. But you cannot be 'angry on' someone or something. Here's an example. *The students were angry with the teacher for giving them a surprise test*."
"Teja has been angry with me ever since I denied him the promotion."
"We were angry with the security guard for not letting us into the stadium."
"The only good thing that happened yesterday was that I finally managed to eat a slice of Sujatha's famous cake."
"Her cakes are awesome. It's not surprising that people are mad for them."
"Mad for? You mean 'mad at'?"
"No, I don't! There's a big difference in meaning between 'mad at' and 'mad for'. When you're 'mad at' someone, you're angry with the person."
"The children were mad at the parents for not buying a new TV."
"When you say that you're 'mad for' something, it means you want that thing very much."
"Could it be a person?"
"Yes, it could! The expression could also mean that you are terribly fond of the person or thing. Even after 20 years of marriage, she is mad for her husband."
"There was a time when most kids in my family were mad for masala dosa."
upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Roil:
be agitated; make turbid by stirring up the sediments of

Synonyms: roil, churn, boil, moil

Usage: *A fierce storm roiled the sea.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/roilpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɹɔɪl/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Modi's roadshow poses no hurdles to NEET students as had been feared

There were apprehensions that the event would cause problems for students to reach the examination centres and it had drawn criticism

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadshow in central parts of the city on Sunday morning, students reached examination centres without any hurdles for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) (UG) - 2023 held in the city.

The roadshow was feared to pose hurdles to students from reaching the examination centres and had drawn criticism from the Opposition Congress too.

The NEET (UG) - 2023 was held between 2 p.m. and 5:20 p.m. and the reporting time at the centres was 12.30 p.m.

As the traffic police had imposed traffic restrictions till noon and the roadshow had been delayed by over an hour on Saturday, students and parents feared it would be the same on Sunday and many students left early and reached the centres, to avoid delays.

Students arriving at the Army Public School in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

However, the roadshow wound up before 12 p.m. and by the time the students began pouring in at examination centres, the roads were cleared.

"We left Kengeri at around 10.30 a.m. to reach the examination centre at Trinity Circle. However, before we reached there, the roadshow had concluded. Though there were some traffic diversions, we were not stuck in a jam anywhere," said one of the parents, who dropped his child off at the examination centre.

Meanwhile, the students who appeared for the exam felt that the question paper was "moderate". "The Biology part of the paper was easy, but the Physics part was a bit difficult. Physics questions were more tricky," one of the students said. "All the questions were based on the NCERT syllabus. Compared to previous years, this year the questions were easy to answer. In the Biology paper, Zoology questions were easier than Botany. But analytical questions were more in Physics. This year there were more multiple choice questions (MCQ) in the II PU exam, which helped students answer the NEET better," said Devaraju, a subject expert.

Despite instructions by the National Testing Agency (NTA), some students were seen struggling at examination centres as they had come wearing ornaments, carrying mobile phones, and some failed to bring photo identity cards.

A total of 1,34,379 students from the State wrote the exam. This year, 20,87,445 students registered across India.

Gang loots former MLA's house

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

A group of unknown people robbed a former MLA, S.M. Nagaraj, of valuables at his farmhouse in Gadihalli near Tarikere in Chikkamagaluru district on Saturday night. Nagaraj and his family were allegedly assaulted by the group.

Jaishankar's jibe at Rahul Gandhi

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said here on Sunday that he was prepared to take lessons on China from Rahul Gandhi but learnt that he himself was taking lessons from the Chinese Ambassador and hence he would rather talk to the original source.

Interaction

He was participating in an interactive session on 'Foreign Policy of Modi government', organised by Thinkers' Forum. In reply to a question Mr. Jaishankar continued that he was prepared to receive serious propositions on China from Mr. Gandhi but it should not turn into a slanging match.

Foreign policy

"Foreign policy has also become an arena but on certain issues we need to have a responsibility to behave in a manner so as to not weaken our collective position abroad. But in the last three years there have been misleading narrations and interpretations pertaining to the developments on the LAC with China," said Mr. Jaishankar.

He also tore into Pakistan for its behaviour as a SAARC member, saying that it denied India access to Afghanistan, denied the Most Favoured Nation status for trade and nothing was working except terrorism.

"It is not in our interest to be locked in perpetual conflict with Pakistan but we have to draw a line somewhere and stand for ourselves," said Mr. Jaishankar.

Rank of counteries

On the need to rebut narratives about India being spread by western institutions Mr. Jaishankar said he had read all the reports on indexes like Press Freedom Index, Democracy Index etc., and found India behind countries like even Afghanistan, which is preposterous. These were mind games and akin to lowering the ranks of countries one did not like and promoting those one liked, he further added.

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Narendra Modi winds up his election campaign with two rallies and a roadshow

The Prime Minister addressed 18 public rallies and held three roadshows in the State since April 28, when he launched his campaign for the May 10 Assembly polls

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/ SHIVAMOGGA/NANJANGUD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed off his high-voltage campaign for the Assembly elections in Karnataka with a roadshow in Bengaluru, and two public rallies at Aynur in Shivamogga and at Nanjangud in Mysuru district, on Sunday. He also met 49 persons from the Hakki Pikki tribe, hailing from Sadashivapura, Shivamogga district, who were recently rescued from Sudan. With this, he addressed a total of 18 public rallies and held three roadshows in the State since April 28, when he launched his campaign.

Karnataka Votes 2023

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his roadshow in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Enthusiastic crowds

Mr. Modi started his day with a 6.2 km roadshow from New Thippasandra to Trinity Circle in Bengaluru. Despite early morning rain, thousands of people gathered on either side of the streets, some of them armed with umbrellas.

As the Bharatiya Janata Party workers, placed on either side of his vehicle, showered Mr. Modi with flowers, he was seen throwing back flowers at the people who had gathered to greet him.

Like on Saturday, many workers of the BJP had come dressed as Lord Hanuman and a group of over 200 priests chanted the Hanuman Chalisa, reportedly as a mark of protest against the Congress "promising to ban the Bajrang Dal" if they came to power.

Mr. Modi, speaking at the rally in Shivamogga, alleged that the Congress would stall the growth of the State. "The Congress has assured 10 lakh jobs in the next five years. They are promising to create 2 lakh jobs in the private sector a year. However, the BJP, which came to power only three-and-a-half years ago, created more than 13 lakh jobs. Hence, I am telling you the Congress will take the State's growth in the reverse direction," he claimed.

Speaking at the last rally in Nanjangud, he alleged that whenever the Congress came to power, "terrorists and criminals become emboldened." "Foreign investment for industrial and economic growth will come to the State only when law and order is good. Only the BJP government can ensure a good law and order situation," he claimed.

He accused the "first family of the Congress" of trying to "separate Karnataka from the rest of India" and this was an insult to the patriotism of Kannadigas. He said the Congress on Saturday promised to "protect the sovereignty of Karnataka" and claimed this meant "they did not believe that Karnataka was not a part of India."

'Don't be carried away by communal agenda used to mask maladministration'

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU/BENGALURU

The Congress leaders, including Priyanka Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, M. Mallikarjun Kharge, and others, held roadshows and addressed rallies in various parts of the State, as the political campaigning reached its crescendo on Sunday ahead of the May 10 elections.

Speaking at Mulky on the outskirts of Mangaluru, Ms. Gandhi urged people not to be carried away by communally sensitive issues raised by the Bharatiya Janata Party to mask its alleged maladministration in Karnataka.

She said she was surprised to hear Prime Minister Narendra Modi speak at the same place two days ago about terrorism and national security. "I do not say these issues are not important. These issues are close to the hearts of people," she said, adding that at the time of elections, voting is based on issues that people are immediately concerned with, such as livelihood and administration.

People, she said, were concerned about the '40% commission' allegation made by the contractors' association, religious heads, and educational institution representatives. This corruption charge has caused a severe dent to the image of Karnataka, she said.

The Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi campaigning at Shivajinagar on Sunday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

People were also concerned over inflation, which has increased manifold in the last four years. The domestic gas cylinder is priced ₹1,100. The prices of dal, vegetables, diesel, and petrol have also increased. Unemployment too was a concern. In Karnataka, in the last three years, employment has reduced and over 2.5 lakh government posts were vacant, she said.

"Parties think they can avoid issues of corruption, unemployment, and inflation by raising communally sensitive issues that raise the emotions of people. They seek votes on these emotional issues and win elections, and not work on issues that matter. This practice should be ended," she said.

In Bengaluru, she visited Mahadevapura and Bengaluru South constituencies later in the day.

On threat to Kharge

Mr. Gandhi participated in rallies at Shivajinagar and Anekal. Speaking at Anekal, he expressed surprise over why Mr. Modi had not spoken about threats made to Mr. Kharge, allegedly by the BJP party candidate in Kalaburagi, even as he accused the Congress of encouraging terrorism. "I have lost two members of my family to acts of terrorism. Do you want to teach about terrorism? You owe an answer on your party man threatening Mr. Kharge," he said.

Mr. Kharge, speaking at Kamalapur, said he would not be cowed down by any threats. He said, "MPs elected from this region don't have the freedom to put their demands before Modiji. Everything is centralised. Modiji does not even speak with them. They watch Modiji from a distance like Doordarshan. Those who have power don't have the capacity to speak and those who can speak don't have the power. Then how will Karnataka witness any progress?"

Rahul talks to gig workers

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday reiterated his party's promise in its manifesto to set up a Gig Workers' Welfare Board in Karnataka with a corpus fund of ₹3,000 crore and provide minimum hourly wages. He held an interaction with a group of gig workers at a private hotel here and spoke to them about their issues over a cup of coffee and masala dosa. He also accompanied a delivery partner, riding pillion.

'People will not reject a leader who continues to do good work'

Shantinagar MLA Nalapad Ahmed Haris is seeking a fourth consecutive term

INTERVIEW

Nalapad Ahmed Haris

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

People will never reject a leader who continues to do good work, understands the needs of all in the community and stays close to them, says Shantinagar MLA Nalapad Ahmed Haris, who is now seeking a fourth consecutive term from the same seat representing the Congress.

Excerpts from an exclusive conversation with *The Hindu*:

With elections just a couple of days away, what is the indication on the ground?

I clearly see that people are with me and I am with the people. I am finishing my third term as MLA from Shantinagar constituency with this election, and I can only see an increasing acceptance here among people as they have seen me working committedly for the development of the constituency over several years.

Do you see any element of anti-incumbency since you are now seeking re-election for the fourth time from the same seat?

None. Usually, that is possible when the same candidate of the same party is fielded repeatedly from a constituency. But in the case of Shantinagar, I've been closely working with people for so many years and they are happy with me. If you do good work,

Nalapad Ahmed Haris. SUDHAKARA JAIN

people won't let you go. This has been my experience over and over again, term after term.

What are some of the development works you have executed in the current term?

I have focused on the overall development of the constituency, mostly working on the upgradation of the entire constituency, repairing big and small roads, street lighting, construction of pavements, and basically improving road and building infrastructure.

We have also worked on waterlogging issues and have been able to minimise that problem unless there are heavy rains and floods.

If re-elected, what would be your immediate focus areas?

My constituency urgently requires a 500-bed multi-speciality hospital. I've already discussed this matter with the State government and sought support. So building healthcare infrastructure will be the primary focus for me, in my next term. Developing new parks and playgrounds and repairing and cleaning the existing parks and playgrounds will also be a priority.

To remain healthy, people in my constituency require good public infrastructure such as parks, and in case of any illness, they need a full-fledged healthcare provider.

You topped a list on the performance of MLAs in the Assembly (2018-2023) by asking 591 questions and recording an attendance of 84%, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). How good a time manager are you?

I believe that once you are committed to doing something, everything is possible and you get time to do everything that is required to be done.

Will your son, Mohammed Haris Nalapad, enter electoral politics anytime soon?

Yes, he will enter electoral politics. But the party will decide when.

Case against unknown person for 'EC survey'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The West Division cyber crime police are on the lookout for an unknown person who is conducting an online survey in the name of the Election Commission of India.

G.V. Nagaraju, a DPAR official, has complained to the cyber crime police to probe the matter, based on which the West Division cyber crime police have registered an FIR charging the unknown person under various sections of the IT Act and also under Section 170 (impersonating as public servant), 406 (criminal breach of trust), and 420 (cheating) under the IPC recently.

Sub inspector Dodda Basappa H. said that the accused used a virtual number in the name of the Election Commission on India to call people randomly for a party-wise survey.

The officials even cross-checked the number with a mobile application, which mentioned the number as belonging to "Election Commission Of India",he said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

REMEMBRANCE

Dr. Govindammal
(08 May 1944 - 02 Jan 2016)
We miss you Dear Nanamma on your Birthday today !
Druv Pradeep Krishna

DEATH

Shri K.T. Krishnamurthy @ KTK
(Age 94),
Ex ESSO/ MRL/ MRPL
attained Sivaloga Prapthi peacefully at his residence on 4th May,2023.
Deeply mourned by his wife, sons-in-law, grandchildren.
044-42110326 / 9791187236

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given to the general public that, **Mrs. Jyothi M**, wife of Mr. Ashwathaman M.L, Aged about 52 years, Residing at Flat No.202, Sindhu Apartment No. 1000, 9th Cross, HMT Main Road, Divanarapalya Mathikere, VTC: Bengaluru North, PO: Msrit, Sub-District: Bengaluru North, Bengaluru District-560054 (herein after referred to as the "**Owner**"), is the sole and absolute owner and is in possession of the immovable residential property bearing House No.500, measuring East to West 09 mtrs and North to South 06 mtrs, totally measuring 54 Sq mtrs, together with structure constructed on ground and first floor, Situated at 'C' Block, 3rd Stage, Vijayanagar, Devaraja Mohalla, Mysuru City(herein after referred to as **"ScheduleProperty"**).

The Owner represents that, apart from her there is no other person/s having any right or claim over the Schedule Property and further represents and confirms that, she has laminated the document mentioned below with respect to the Schedule Property. The intended Mortgager intend to mortgage the Schedule Property. On basis of the below mentioned laminated original Title Deed/Documentand wish to create charge for availing a loan/credit facility from State Bank of India, Indian Institute of Science Campus Branch, Branch Code 02215, Bengaluru, through SBI, RACPC, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru, Code 41161.

In case if any person/s/party having objections/s or any claims towards the said relevant property, the same should be lodged with the intending parties and also with the above stated branch of State Bank of India, within 15 days from publication of this notice.

Laminated Document:

1. Title Deed dated 26.11.2005, executed by MUDA Mysuru, represented by its Secretary, in favour of Mrs. M. Jyothi, registered vide document No. MYS-1-11049/2005-06 of Book I, Stored in CD No. MYSD-60, in the office of the Sub-Regsistrar, Mysuru South.

Date : 08-05-2023
Place: Mysuru

Mrs. M. Jyothi
Mobile: 9448905574

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PERSONAL

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IN THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, BENGALURU
B.S.N.L. Building, 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore-560001.
O.A.NO.682/2022

BETWEEN:
CANARA BANK, Jalahalli Branch, No.229 & 511, Bhanumathy Complex, S.M. Road, T. Dasarahalli, Jalahalli, Bengaluru-560 057. **... APPLICANT**

AND:
M/s. AADYA ORGANICS And Another. ...DEFENDANTS

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES, 1993 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION

To,
1) M/s. AADYA ORGANICS, At Sonnenahalli Villege, No.8, 1st Cross Naganadevanahalli, Sonnenahalli Village, Kengeri Satellite Town, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru-560 060. Represented by its Proprietor, Sri. Manu Kumar S.. **... DEFENDANT No. 1.**
2) Sri. Manu Kumar S., S/o. Shivanna, Aged about 36 Years, Proprietor, M/s. AADYA ORGANICS, At Sonnenahalli Village, No.8, 1st Cross Naganadevanahalli, Sonnenahalli Village, Kengeri Satellite Town, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru-560 060.
And Also: R/at, No.308, 6th Cross, 13th Main, Gokula 1st Stage, H.M.T. Layout, Bengaluru-560 054. **... DEFENDANT No. 2.**

WHEREAS, the Applicant has instituted an application under Section 19 (25) of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against the Defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.11,69,943-72 (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Sixty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Three and Seventy Two Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 payable together with applicable current and future interest at the rate of 13.40% p.a., in respect of Term Loan A/c bearing No.3195727000004 and also a sum of **Rs.18,33,110-55(Rupees Eighteen Lakhs Thirty Three Thousand One Hundred Ten and Fifty Five Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 payable together with applicable current and future interest at the rate of 12.35% p.a., in respect of OD/OCC A/C bearing No.3195261000028. Hence, a total sum of **Rs.30,03,054-27 (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Three Thousand Fifty Four and Twenty Seven Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 together with applicable current and future interests thereon compounded with quarterly rests from the date of application till the date of realization or actual payment and Other Reliefs.

Take notice that you are hereby required to appear before this Tribunal to Show Cause on **15/7/2023 at 10:30 A.M.** in Person or by Pleader/Advocate duly instructed as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted.

Take notice that in case of default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THIS TRIBUNAL ON THIS **27 DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2023.**

By Order of the Tribunal.
Sd/- Registrar,
Debts Recovery Tribunal - I, Bengaluru.

IN THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, BENGALURU
B.S.N.L. Building, 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore-560001.
O.A. NO. 922/2022

BETWEEN:
CANARA BANK, Jalahalli Branch, No.229 & 511, Bhanumathy Complex, S.M. Road, T. Dasarahalli, Jalahalli, Bengaluru-560 057. **... APPLICANT**

AND:
NISARGA FOOD PRODUCETS And Another. ...DEFENDANTS

SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF DRT (PROCEDURE) RULES, 1993 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION

WHEREAS, the Applicant has instituted an application under Section 19 (25) of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against You the above Defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.20,56,418-49 (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Fifty Six Thousand Four Hundred Eighteen and Forty Nine Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 payable together with applicable current and future interest at the rate of 11.35% p.a., in respect of Term Loan A/c bearing No.3195727000006 and also a sum of **Rs.7,74,041-68 (Rupees Seven Lakhs Seventy Four Thousand forty One and Sixty Eight Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 payable together with applicable current and future interest at the rate of 11.35% p.a., in respect of OD/OCC A/C bearing No.3195261000034. Hence, a total sum of **Rs.28,30,460-17 (Rupees Twenty Eight Lakhs Thirty Thousand Four Hundred Sixty and Seventeen Paisa Only)** jointly by the Defendants No.1 and 2 together with applicable current and future interests thereon compounded with quarterly rests from the date of application till the date of realization or actual payment and Other Reliefs.

You are hereby required to show cause within 30 days of the service of the before this Tribunal in person or through your counsel and produce relevant documents in your defense and show cause on **11/9/2023 at 10.30 a.m.,** and as to why the prayed for should not be granted.

Take notice that in case of non-appearance the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THIS TRIBUNAL ON THIS **28 DAY OF APRIL, 2023.**

By Order of the Tribunal.
Sd/- Registrar,
Debts Recovery Tribunal - I, Bengaluru.

To,
1) NISARGA FOOD PRODUCTS, No.11B, Mariyappanapalya, Ramasandra Village, Sulikere Post, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru-560 060. Represented by its Proprietrix, Smt. Parvathamma. **...DEFENDANT No. 1.**
2) Smt. Parvathamma, W/o, Shivanna, Aged about 58 Years, Proprietrix, NISARGA FOOD PRODUCTS, No.11B, Mariyappanapalya, Ramasandra Village, Sulikere Post, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru -560 060.
And Also: R/at, No.418/E, 1st Floor, 4th Cross, H.M.T. Layout, Mathikere, Bengaluru-560 054. **...DEFENDANT No. 2.**

NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR ALLOTMENT OF SHOPS AT MADRAS SAPPERS INSTITUTE, MADRAS ENGINEER GROUP & CENTRE, BENGALURU-560042

1. Officer-in-Charge, Non-CSD, Madras Engineer Group & Centre, Bengaluru-42 invities applications for allotment of various regimental shops on rental basis at this Intitute. Shops would be allotted to highest bidder based on under mentioned priority in descending order :-

(a) War widows/ widows of def personnel killed while on duty.
(b) Disabled Soldiers.
(c) Ex-Servicemen.
(d) Spouse/widow of Ex-Servicemen.

2. Details of shop & sequence of auction are as under :-

Ser No	Shop No	Category of Shop	Plinth Area (In Mtr)
(a)	05	Uniform Accessories & Kit items	5.70 x 2.70

3. Application form (at no cost) may be obtained from reception of Main Gate, MEG & Centre as per following details :-

(a) Issue of application from 08 May 2023 to 04 Jun 2023 (from 0900hrs to 1700hrs).

(b) Date of receipt of application from 08 May 2023 to 05 Jun 2023 (upto 1100hrs).

4. Auction of shops will be carried out on 06 Jun 2023 by 1130hrs at OIC, Non CSD, MEG & Centre.

5. Detailed instructions on eligibility and terms and conditions be read carefully before applying.

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Get creative

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

I am in Class 8 and want to be space scientist. What do I have to study more of and what course should I do after Class 12? Ahlaam

Dear Ahlaam,

You will need to study Science and Mathematics in Class 11 and 12. Participate in science projects/competitions and ask questions to develop your critical thinking and problem solving skills. Learn computer programming and coding languages. After Class 12, do a Bachelors in Physics, Astronomy, Aerospace Engineering, or Maths. Then a Master's and a Ph.D in the specialised area of space science. Look for internships and research opportunities in related organisations and universities as this will give you experience and exposure.

I finished B.Tech. EEE in 2018. I want to consider teaching in schools. Can I do a B.Ed. in Maths? What are my other options? Sreelakshmi

A B.Ed. in Math is a great option if you want to become a school teacher. Generally, the requirement is a Bachelor's degree in any discipline with a minimum aggregate score of 50%. but check the criteria in the institution of your choice. You could also complete a teaching certification programme like Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) or State Teacher Eligibility Test (STET), which are mandatory to teach in a government school, or do a Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). Finally consider teaching online.

I am a B.A. English (Hons) graduate preparing for the Civil Services Exams. I am more interested in graphic design, blogging and designing pages. Is there any career related to my interests? Minuara

Dear Minuara,

Yes but you will need to complete specific courses to equip yourself adequately. You could start your own design company with your communication and creative skills and leverage your English degree here. For Graphic Design, learn design layouts, logos, visual communication and to use tools like Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, and Illustrator. You can work in ad agencies, social media houses, publishing and marketing companies. For Blogging, start a page, and share your thoughts, ideas, and experiences. You can look at possibilities to monetise this via affiliate marketing and ads. Designing pages will need you to qualify as a web designer or have a UX/UI certification. Learn tools like CSS, HTML, JavaScript, UX/UI design tools like Sketch, Figma, and Adobe XD.

I have completed B.Com. (Hons) and am preparing for CAT. Which MBA field is suitable for girls today? What should I do to improve my skills and make my CV attractive? Ankita

Dear Ankita,

Some popular MBA specialisations are Marketing, Finance, Human Resource Management, and Operations Management. To make your CV attractive, focus on developing skills that are relevant to your chosen specialisation. Consider doing online certifications; build a strong network; take up internships, and part-time jobs and ensure that your CV showcases your extracurricular activities and leadership, teamwork, and communication skills.

Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

SCHOLARSHIPS

VAIBHAV Fellowship 2023
An opportunity offered by the Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi.
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Rewards: A fellowship of $5,000 and other benefits
Deadline: July 31
Application: Online b4s.in/plus/VAIB6

Goonj Urban Fellowship 2023-24
The non-profit Goonj offers this 12-month programme where fellows will work in both urban and rural areas in any part of the country by engaging with the communities on ground.
Eligibility: Open to a candidate between 21 and 30 years as on July 31, 2023. Candidate must graduate by July 31, 2023 and be fluent in Hindi or English (reading, writing and speaking).
Rewards: ₹20,000 per month
Deadline: May 25
Application: Online b4s.in/plus/GUF3

Fulbright-Nehru Masters Fellowships 2024-25
An opportunity offered by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) to pursue a Master's degree at selected U.S. colleges and universities for specific courses.
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Application: Online bit.ly/3AZvVZb

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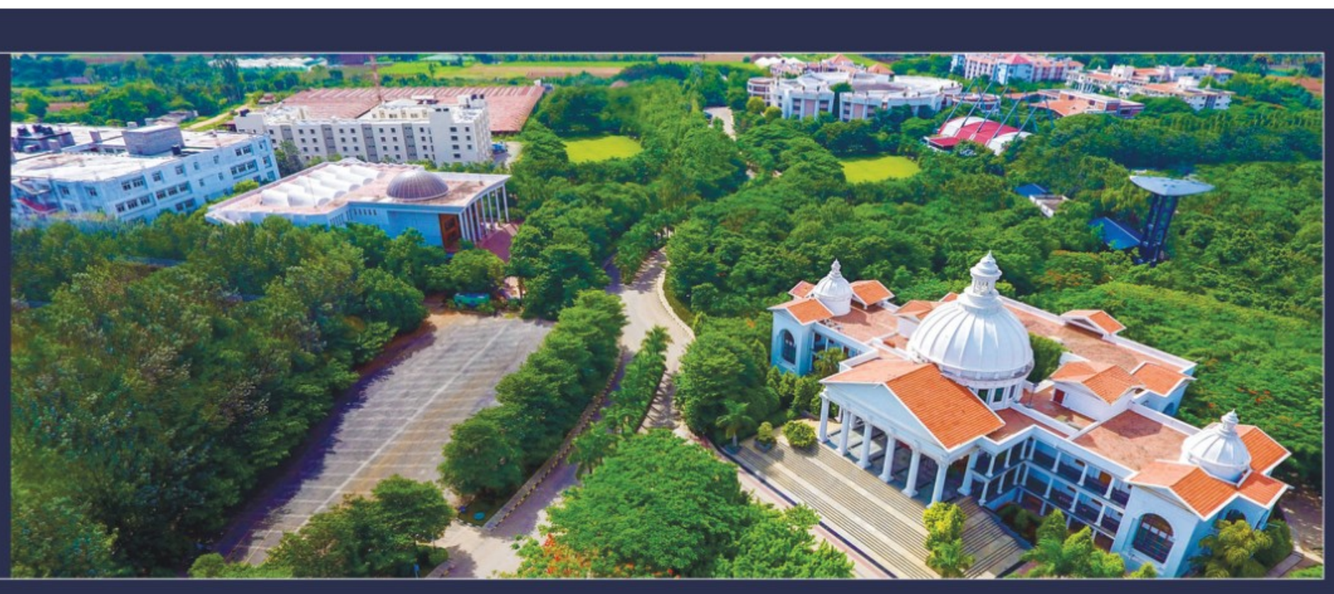

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BG-BGE

No election fever here: Migrant workers feel like nowhere citizens

K.C. Deepika
BENGALURU

Anjaneya, 21, is a B.A. final year student from Raichur in North Karnataka, who is now helping lay footpaths in an upmarket area of Bengaluru.

"We will go for one day, cast our vote, and come back. We are here because during summer, no agriculture is possible.... Farmers need to be helped with loan waivers and other measures as variations in rain is affecting us a lot. We have 1.5 acres but the crop was destroyed due to heavy rain. I am doing labour while studying so I can get a better job," he said.

According to the Census 2011 data on migration, 42.12% of Greater Bengaluru's population originates from outside the district or outside the State. FILE PHOTO

As election fever catches up in Karnataka and political discourse overshadows everything else, for the large number of migrant workers in Bengaluru, who come from far and near in search of work, the world is the same. According to the Census 2011 data on migration into cities and States, not only did the number of migrants in Karnataka increase from the previous decade, but with 42.12% of Greater Bengaluru's population originating from outside the district or outside the State, ranking second among comparable metros with migrant populations.

Cannot vote

Like most first-time voters, Yellamma, 20, was looking forward to casting her vote this time. But she is far away from her hometown in Raichur district, toiling in Bengaluru as a migrant worker. Belonging to a family of agricultural labourers, travelling to the city in search of work during the summer months is a routine affair. "I had studied till class X, but could not go any further because of problems at home. My husband's family and I are here now and may not be able to vote. If we didn't have loans and had work in our hometown, we need not have come here," she said, as she laid a footpath with others from her district.

Stuck in the city, she asked the new government to control price rise: "We live in sheds here and the bathroom is outside. When it rains, the sheds leak. In the city, we also have to spend extra to buy things as they are expensive," she said. Gangavathi also came from Raichur and is living in a labour colony in Jakkur. "The politicians back home ask us to cast our vote in return for getting us basic documents. But no one bothers giving us houses or jobs," she says.

Gowramma, Mannamma and Doddasomappa are also from the same district, working in another part of the city. They were seen cleaning the roadside drains, lifting silt and garbage ahead of the monsoon. "We have to spend ₹600-700 for our bus journey to go cast out vote," said Gowramma, adding that if they had shelter and small land holdings, they would not have had to travel so far for work. Sitting and watching them is 12-year-old Rajshekhar. "I came here with my parents. I like my village better," he said, as his mother intervenes and says she has no option but to bring him to the work site as she cannot leave him at the labour camp.

Other parts of country

Bengaluru is also become home to a large number of migrants from other parts of the country. Chotu, from Unnao, Uttar Pradesh, came to the city 10 years ago and set up a roadside nursery. "My vote goes waste as I am registered in my hometown. My baby, wife, and parents are there, so are all my documents. So I can't register here and I cannot keep travelling to U.P. as well," he says.

"Bengaluru has almost become like Mumbai. People here are nice., but I cannot afford a house on rent. That is why I left my family in my hometown. I live at the nursery. I cannot ask for anything from the government here because I don't vote here," he said. "Employment needs to be generated where we are. Why should we live away from family for work?"

Notice on ad: Cong. accuses EC of 'proactive zeal towards Opposition'; asks why PM has not been questioned

The Congress's response cites 11 specific instances of 'egregious violations' by Bharatiya Janata Party leaders

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after the Election Commission sought evidence from Karnataka Congress over its "corruption rate card" advertisements published in newspapers targeting the BJP ahead of the Assembly elections, the party on Sunday hit back accusing the EC of taking action in violation of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution and subjecting it to "unfair and unequal treatment."

In the preliminary response to EC, Congress Rajya Sabha MP Abhishek Singhvi alleged that there was an "uneven playing field" and no action had been taken against BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, even when there were documented representations made.

"This treatment of the EC is not only in violation of the fundamental guarantees, but also violates the concept of equality before law and the conduct of free and fair elections," said the Congress.

Abhishek Singhvi, Congress MP. FILE PHOTO

'First time in history'

Mr. Singhvi said that the Congress advertisements did not speak about the personal life of any candidate or any individual, and that the "40% commission" allegations had been in public domain for long. The 15-page response also said that it might be the first time in the Election Commission's history that a national party is summoned to provide evidence in support of political advertisement. The Congress has rejected the claim of having violated any law.

Stating that the 24-hour deadline to respond to the notice with evidence was "unreasonable," the party said that to ask the Legislative party leader Siddaramaiah and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar to withdraw from the campaign to respond to the notice with only 24 hours left for campaigning was not appropriate.

Abhishek Singhvi says that Congress advertisements did not speak about the personal life of any candidate or individual

Accusing EC of having "proactive zeal towards the Opposition," the Congress said that despite "numerous detailed, documented and numbered representation" provided about the "brazen, shocking... and repeated violation of every single electoral guideline by Mr. Modi, Mr. Shah, BJP president J.P. Nadda, and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and other BJP leaders," no show-cause notice has been issued for these deliberate violations.

The Congress said that Mr. Modi's speeches had false remarks against the Indian National Congress. Providing examples to "show skewed approach of EC," the Congress' response provided 11 specific instances of "egregious violations" by BJP leaders, including Mr. Modi. The response provided specific instances where political advertisements were given against the Congress and also about "false achievements" of the BJP, and demanded that the BJP be questioned on matters that fall under the same legal category.

EC advisory

Meanwhile, the Election Commission, in an advisory to the media, has stated that no political advertisements should be published on poll day and the day before without pre-certification.

The advisory came after national parties complained about the alleged unverified claims and counter-claims, a note issued on Sunday said. Instances of advertisements that are offensive and misleading have been brought to the notice of the EC, it said, adding that such advertisement in the last stage of election will vitiate the election process.

At 92, oldest legislator is confident of support from young voters

Sharath S. Srivatsa
DAVANGERE

"Appaji is coming to your doorstep to seek your votes... please come out," a loudspeaker blared, while an electric buggy carrying the 92-year-old industrialist-turned politician Shamanur Shivashankarappa, slowly moved in a narrow lane of a residential colony in Davangere Cotton Mills area.

As the campaign vehicle moved around, men and women of all ages came out to see him and wave at him, as he waved back. Amid chants of "Congress victory" and bursting of firecrackers, some who know him personally walked up him to exchange pleasantries.

Congress leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa campaigning in Davangere South Assembly on Saturday. RAVICHANDRAN

Once city of cotton mills

In his traditional Davangere South Assembly constituency, which was once known for its cotton textile mills, Mr. Shivashankarappa, the oldest sitting legislator and possibly the oldest candidate in the fray, is being challenged by his one-time associate and now a BJP candidate Ajay Kumar. The Lingayat leader from Central Karnataka, who heads the Bapuji Group of Institutions, is among the richest candidates with declared assets of over ₹292 crore. He is seeking to win his Assembly elections for the sixth time.

"I have always been with people... I don't feel like 92, but more 60 or 70," Mr. Shivashankarappa said, expressing enthusiasm to contest the elections.

Shamanur Shivashankarappa is among the richest candidates with declared assets of over ₹292 crore

As his buggy moves through in the sweltering heat, among the many jostling for a glimpse are also those selfie-seekers to whom he cheerfully obliges. At some places, women workers dance in front of the vehicle. The young - many yet to vote and some first-time voters - also come out to see the man who has represented them in the Assembly five times. "It is an honour that we have such an old legislator, who continues to meet the voters. But what we need are more IT parks that generate employment," says Surya B.M. and Vasudev V.S., first-time voters and third year students of Bapuji Institute of Engineering Technology.

Hectic campaigning

Over six hours of hectic campaigning daily in the heat does not deter the nonagenarian Congress leader, who will turn 93 next month. Like most politicians, he gets down to bring about cohesion in his campaign. If at the beginning of the campaign, he had intervened to solve a tiff among two of his supporters, at the end of the campaign, he drove up to an area on the city's outskirts to convince community members to remain united since his team had intelligence that they could swing to the other side.

When asked if he was confident of getting the votes of youngsters, he said: "I am 100% confident. Because of them, I have won five times."

Will ban liquor if people wish so, says Kumaraswamy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Janata Dal (Secular) is not averse to banning liquor in the State if people wish for it, former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy said on Sunday.

"The BJP was the one that extended the sale of liquor to villages. If people wish to, we will ban the sale of liquor completely," Mr. Kumaraswamy announced at Doddaballapura. He said that leaders from North India have been wooing voters on behalf of two national parties, and they have suddenly developed a liking for Karnataka.

"We will know if they have come to Karnataka out of love or will they bid goodbye after elections. None of them have spoken about issues of land, water and language of Karnataka," he said, adding that they did not raise their voice when people were in trouble during COVID or during floods.

An intense political battle unfolds in toy town as old rivals face off again

KEY CONSTITUENCY

Sharath S. Srivatsa
CHANNAPATNA
(RAMANAGARA DISTRICT)

Months before the elections to State Assembly was announced, Channapatna was witness to a few serious skirmishes between the Janata Dal (Secular) and BJP workers, pointing to what could be a closely fought election.

Inching closer to the election day, the land of toys promises an engaging battle as former Chief Minister and JD(S) candidate H.D. Kumaraswamy and former Minister and BJP candidate C.P. Yogeshwar head into a seemingly photo finish.

While Mr. Kumaraswamy defeated Mr. Yogeshwar, a five-time legislator, in 2018 with comparative ease, it may not be the case this time since the BJP candidate had been planning a meticulous comeback for the past year or so, BJP insiders say. The battle is also intense as the JD(S) believes that the BJP candidate played a crucial role in bringing its government down in 2019.

This election is being seen as a vote for Mr. Kumaraswamy as the "future Chief Minister" against the sympathy factor for Mr. Yogeshwar.

In this Vokkaliga dominated constituency, where votes of Muslims, SCs, and OBCs decide the outcome, the Congress has fielded Gangadhara S. from the fishermen community. Women will play an important role with their numbers higher than men.

Question of access

The BJP workers are campaigning on the basis of the work by Mr. Yogeshwar, who is credited for rejuvenating tanks that increased ground water level, in the region mostly dependent on sericulture, dairy farming, and coconut among other crops.

"Mr. Kumaraswamy was not only inaccessible but did not visit villages. He kept himself busy with State and Ramanagara affairs," alleged Bengaluru-based techie H.R. Ranjith, who has taken leave to campaign for the BJP.

Dismissing the allegations, an aide close to Mr. Kumaraswamy said that the former Chief Minister attended every KDA meeting, and implemented works at the village level.

Harish, a resident of Channapatna and a JD(S) voter, said: "Mr. Kumaraswamy is among the most accessible politicians. He has taken forward the water schemes and ensured water at villages. Concrete roads have been laid."

Long-time political observers say that both candidates have worked for the constituency, and there will be a bitter fight at every booth level, with small-margin victory predicted.

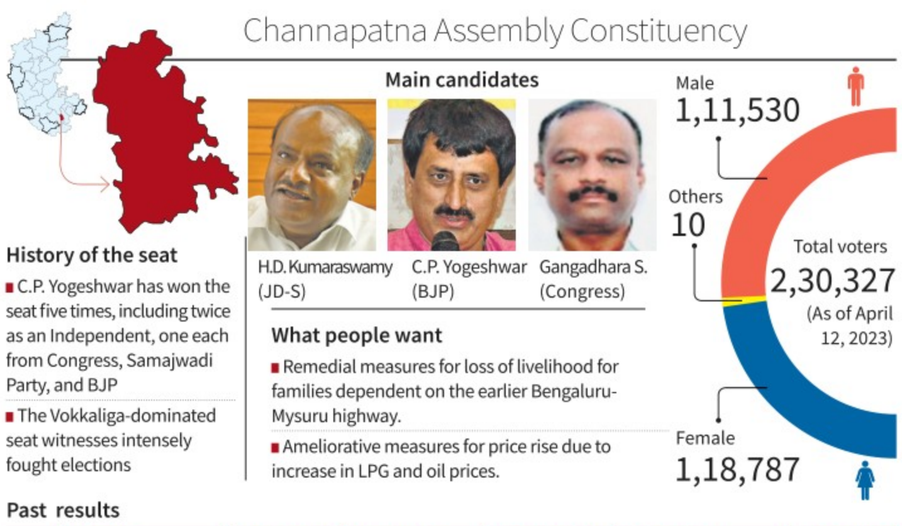
"Villages are divided in their political affiliations and no one can say that either JD(S) or BJP have full support from a particular village or a hobli. The winning margin could be very small. Migration of local leaders to other parties will also be a contributor to the election outcome," said a gram panchayat worker on condition of anonymity. For example, in the gram panchayat at Chakkere, the native of Mr. Yogeshwar, out of 14 members, 10 members are JD(S) workers though the elections are not held on symbols.

OBC votes

The BJP believes that the OBC votes, which went in favour of Congress candidate H.M. Revanna, a Kuruba, during 2018, resulting in Mr. Yogeshwar's defeat, is likely to come back. Mr. Kumaraswamy is expected to garner the crucial Muslim votes in the light of polarisation effort by the BJP.

The battle ground - once buzzing with tourists - is no more the same as the newly-laid Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has carried the bulk of the traffic away from the town, damaging many businesses. However, Hameed, a toy seller, believes that though it has affected thousands in Channapatna alone, it is not seen as an election issue.

While the BJP workers believe that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally near Channapatna will provide a boost, retired teacher Suresh B., a resident of Bhyarapatna, asked: "Mr. Modi did not speak on local issues or price rise. Why is he coming to campaign so frequently and what was the reason for his absence when we faced floods?"


Channapatna Assembly Constituency
Main candidates
H.D.Kumaraswamy (JD-S)
C.P. Yogeshwar (BJP)
Gangadhara S. (Congress)
History of the seat
C.P. Yogeshwar has won the seat five times, including twice as an Independent, one each from Congress, Samajwadi Party, and BJP
The Vokkaliga-dominated seat witnesses intensely fought elections
What people want
Remedial measures for loss of livelihood for families dependent on the earlier Bengaluru-Mysuru highway.
Ameliorative measures for price rise due to increase in LPG and oil prices.
Male 1,11,530
Others 10
Female 1,18,787
Total voters 2,30,327
(As of April 12, 2023)

Past results

	Winner	Votes polled Vote share	Runner-up	Votes polled Vote share	Third place	Votes polled Vote share
2018	H.D. Kumaraswamy (JD-S)	87,995 46.5%	C.P. Yogeshwar (BJP)	66,465 35.16%	H.M. Revanna (Congress)	30,208 15.98%
2013	C.P. Yogeshwar (SP)	80,099 47.53%	Anitha Kumara-swamy (JD-S)	73,635 43.7%	Sadath Ali Khan (Congress)	8,134 4.83%

The Kerala Story out of T.N. multiplexes

The controversial film was pulled out after protests in a few cities

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Multiplexes in Tamil Nadu, including those in Chennai, decided on Sunday to stop screening *The Kerala Story*, which claims to narrate how young Kerala women are falling victims to a conspiracy to convert them to Islam and enlist them in the Islamic State. The controversial film was pulled out after protests in a few cities by Muslim political groups and other political parties, including Naam Tamilar Katchi, since the film came out on May 5.

The State government and the police intensified security ahead of the film's release. In Coimbatore, those protesting against the film were detained by the police recently. Some political leaders had sought a ban on the film.

The film has received 'poor reviews', a majority of which felt that it tried to paint factual inaccuracies as truth. Its trailer claimed, "Thousands of women have fled their homes to be buried in this desert [Iraq]."

Tiruppur M. Subramaniam, president, Tamil Nadu Theatre and Multiplex Owners' Association, said, "The film has been taken out of almost all theatres. The film was screened only in the cities. Since it is a Hindi film and has no recognisable faces, it will not have patronage."

Negative perception of Muslims

At a protest on Saturday, Naam Tamilar Katchi leader Seeman said there was an attempt to create a negative perception of Muslims in India. "Every time there is an election, they release a film like this. First, there was *Kashmir Files*, then *Burqa* (a web series) and now, *The Kerala Story*. For the 2024 Lok Sabha election, they are preparing to release *Tippu*, portraying him as a man who had destroyed 8,000 Hindu temples and 27 churches and killed 10 lakh Muslims and 2,000 Brahmins. It will be released before the election. We will protest against it too," he said. He asked why the intelligence agencies and the Ministry of Defence did not stop "32,000 women" from being converted, as initially claimed in the film, and trained to indulge in terrorism.

The film's promotional material, which had claimed that 32,000 women were converted to Islam and sent to Syria, was later changed to the stories of three women.

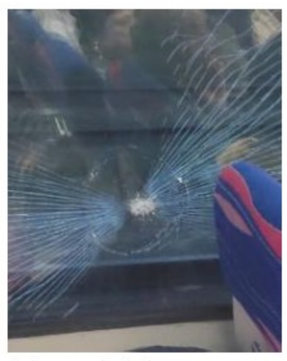
Miscreants hurl stones at Vande Bharat Express

The Hindu Bureau
RANIPET

The window panes of the Mysuru-Chennai Vande Bharat Express (20608) were damaged after miscreants threw stones at the train near the Arakkonam station on Saturday.

The police said the incident occurred at 6.04 p.m. between Mahendravadi and Anavardikhanpettai, a distance of around 10 km, when the train was proceeding to MGR Chennai Central. The window panes of seats 75 and 76 in the coach C6 were damaged. No passengers were injured.

Railway officials reported the incident to the Railway Protection Force (RPF) at MGR Chennai Central. Since the incident occurred within the limits of the Arakkonam station, a case has been registered by the RPF at Arakkonam under Section 154 (Endangering the safety of persons travelling by railway by rash or negligent act or omission) of the Railways Act, 1989, against "unknown persons".


A damaged window pane on the Mysuru-Chennai Vande Bharat Express.

"The area between the two stations where the incident occurred is big. But a special team is working on the case," Mohammed Usman, Inspector, RPF, Arakkonam, told *The Hindu*. In March, a 21-year-old man from Vaniyambadi near Tirupattur was arrested for throwing stones at the Mysuru-bound Vande Bharat Express at Vaniyambadi.

TS students in Manipur likely to be airlifted today

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

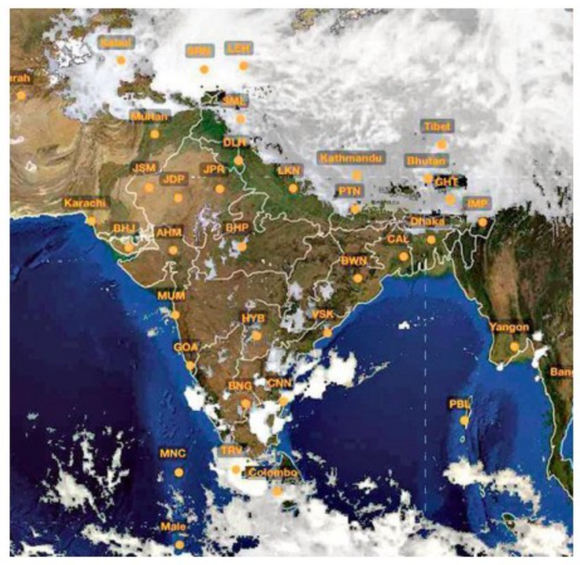
The Telangana government's plan to airlift about 250 students from the State stranded in Manipur has been postponed to Monday, officials said.

The airlift operation was put off due to unforeseen circumstances at violence-hit Manipur and would be carried out after checking the situation.

"In view of the peace and security situation in Manipur, the Telangana government has made special arrangements to bring back Telangana students and citizens who have gone to study in that State and for various works. A special plane was sent there and steps were taken to transport the Telangana students and the Telugu students to Hyderabad. A special control room has been set up in Hyderabad along with Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi," said the release.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Hailstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand. Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty winds likely at isolated places over Punjab, Kerala and Mahe; with lightning at isolated places over Sikkim, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karnataka.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	38.2	25	Kozhikode	—	35.3	28.4
Ahmedabad	—	39.0	27.8	Kurnool	—	37.9	26.7
Aizawl	—	34.5	18.7	Lucknow	—	38.5	24.1
Allahabad	—	38.7	24.4	Madurai	3.0	35.1	24.5
Bengaluru	2.6	29.3	21.1	Mangaluru	—	34.7	26.0
Bhopal	—	36.7	24.7	Mumbai	—	32.6	27.2
Bhubaneswar	—	35.7	26.8	Mysuru	10.0	35.7	23.0
Chandigarh	7.0	34.9	17.7	New Delhi	—	37.6	21.0
Chennai	—	34.8	25.7	Patna	—	39.3	24.4
Coimbatore	9.0	31.0	23.2	Port Blair	—	33.9	27.0
Dehradun	—	32.2	17.5	Puducherry	—	33.2	25.6
Gangtok	19.0	19.6	14.0	Pune	5.8	37.4	23.1
Goa	—	35.0	25.5	Raipur	—	37.6	25.0
Guwahati	—	36.5	21.9	Ranchi	—	35.8	21.4
Hubballi	—	34.0	24.0	Shillong	—	25.3	15.0
Hyderabad	—	34.8	24.5	Shimla	—	21.5	9.9
Imphal	—	31.7	21.3	Srinagar	7.0	20.9	6.5
Jaipur	—	38.6	24.4	Thiruvananthapuram	5.0	33.0	24.6
Kochi	17.0	31.4	25.2	Tiruchi	10.0	32.5	24.0
Kohima	—	22.8	14.2	Vijayawada	—	35.9	26.8
Kolkata	—	36.0	28.2	Visakhapatnam	—	33.1	28.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.10	..—	...4	...108	...131	
Bengaluru	...7	..86	.48	37	40	
Chennai	...3	114	105	67	61	
Delhi	.20	..44	.44	...196	...263	
Hyderabad	.12	..49	.84	55	...100	
Kolkata	.18	..16	.12	57	63	
Lucknow	...8	..50	.31	...124	...155	
Mumbai	.32	..17	.11	74	...175	
Pune	122	189	113	...168	...111	
Visakhapatnam	.17	..46	.13	38	73	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sasaram, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 306 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Sivasagar, Assam recorded a healthy AQI score of 19

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Two Maoists shot dead by Telangana team

The Hindu Bureau
BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Two Maoists were killed in an 'exchange of fire' with the police in Puttapadu forest area under Chhattisgarh's Kistaram police station limits near Telangana's boundary village of Yerrampadu in Charla mandal on Sunday.

The incident took place when a joint team of the Telangana's Greyhounds police and the district special party police was out on a combing operation in the Puttapadu forest area.

One of the deceased Maoists was identified as the banned outfit's Charla Local Organising Squad commander Madakam Yerraiah alias Rajesh. A self-loading rifle and another firearm were recovered from the spot.

Telangana police start probe as sarpanches get threat letters from Maoists in Beerpur

The Hindu Bureau
JAGTIAL

The Beerpur police in Telangana have stepped up investigation into the issue of threat letters by unidentified persons to several sarpanches in the mandal in the name of Maoists two days ago.

Some unknown persons have issued letters in the name of CPI (Maoist) Godavari belt area committee to around 15 sarpanches and several other elected representatives of the rural local bodies in Beerpur mandal, the erstwhile stronghold of Naxalites, on Friday accusing them of encroaching forest lands and illegally issuing pattas.

Some of the elected representatives were warned of 'serious consequences' if they failed to 'mend their ways'.

Police sources, however, said that the threat letters were fake and issued by some disgruntled elements due to old rivalry or land related disputes to settle personal scores.

Meanwhile, in a statement purportedly issued by the CPI (Maoist) Bhadradri-Kothagudem Alluri Sitarama Raju (BK-ASR) division committee, its secretary Azad alleged that the Charla LOS commander Rajesh, 26, and another Adivasi youth of Puttapadu village, were killed in a "fake encounter".

Kerala Opposition leader, in a letter to PM, seeks end to Manipur assault

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly V.D. Satheesan on Sunday penned a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressing anguish over the tragic events of vandalism against churches and persecution of members of the Christian community in strife-torn Manipur.

He also requested the Prime Minister to take necessary steps to ensure the safety of Malayalis who are stranded in Manipur and help them return to Kerala safely.

V.D. Satheesan

'Hotbed of conflict'

Mr. Satheesan, in his letter, said that Manipur, which was peacefully ruled by the Congress, has now been transformed into a hotbed of intense sectarian conflict. Many people have died, and many more have fled to other States in fear of persecution.

Churches have been ransacked and set ablaze in places such as Checkon, New Lambulane, Sangaiprou, and Game Village. There is extreme communal tension and insecurity among the Christian population in the State.

The violence seems to be spreading to other parts of the country and would need the urgent intervention of the governments concerned to curb its spread, he said.

'Silent spectators'

He said that it is unfortunate that the State government and the Union government, which are legally obligated to protect fundamental rights, including the right to life and religious freedom, have become quiet spectators.

"The atrocities came to light after world-renowned boxer Mary Kom expressed her concern over the communal violence engulfing Manipur. Manipur has been simmering since February, when the incumbent administration initiated an eviction campaign aimed at a certain tribal minority. It's heartbreaking to see our Christian brothers and sisters being persecuted in the name of religion in Manipur. I request your urgent intervention to defuse the existing communal tension in the State and to prevent the persecution of members of the Christian community and vandalism of Christian churches in Manipur," he wrote.

Arikompan camps at Megamalai for third day, seems to tour new habitat

The Hindu Bureau
IDUKKI

Wild tusker Arikompan, which was translocated from Chinnakkanal to the Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Idukki, is still roaming the Megamalai region in Tamil Nadu.

According to Tamil Nadu Forest Department officials, the tusker has been camping in the Megamalai region for the past three days. According to Chinnamanur range officer T. Sivaji, the tusker is now roaming the shola forests opposite a Siva temple near Megamalai.

New playground: A view of the Megamalai hill station, near Chinnamannur, in Tamil Nadu. JOMON PAMPAVALLEY

Similar habitat

"The Tamil Nadu Forest Department team sighted the tusker around 3 p.m. on Sunday opposite the temple. The tusker is healthy and eating food. The ban on entry of tourists to the Megamalai hill station will continue. We also imposed some restrictions on the travel of local people in Megamalai," said Mr. Sivaji.

Elephant expert and Kerala High Court-appointed expert committee member P.S. Essa told *The Hindu* that the tusker might be exploring a new habitat at Megamalai.

According to sources, there are only remote chances of the tusker returning to the PTR.

"The continued camping of the tusker in Megamalai indicates that it is finding a new habitat there. The shola forests and tea plantations there resemble the Chinnakkanal habitat," said the source.

Tamil Nadu Forest Department officials complained that the Kerala Forest Department did not provide them timely location details of the tusker.

"If we get timely details, it will help in easy monitoring of the tusker," said a T.N. official.

Efforts under way to bring A.P. students from riot-hit Imphal

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government is making efforts to safely bring back more than 150 students held up in Imphal, the capital city of Manipur, due to violent clashes over the Meitei community's demand for reservation.

These efforts are bearing fruit as the Ministry of Civil Aviation has agreed to evacuate the students by arranging a special flight to Hyderabad or Vijayawada following a request made by former Chief Secretary and Andhra Pradesh Bhavan Resident Commissioner Aditya Nath Das to extend all assistance for the safe return of the youth.

Ministry of Civil Aviation has agreed to evacuate students by arranging a flight to Hyderabad or Vijayawada

In a letter to Rajiv Bansal, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Mr. Das said over 150 students were stranded in the capital of Manipur because of the riots.

He also wrote to Rajesh Kumar Singh, the Chief Secretary of Manipur, seeking to facilitate the safe return of the students.

By 2027-28, T.N. peak power demand may be 23,000 MW

Sanjay Vijayakumar
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's peak power demand is expected to be nearly 23,000 MW by 2027-28. It is expected to grow at a compounded annual rate of 5.8% from 17,306 MW in 2022-23.

The Southern Region's peak demand for 2027-28 is expected to increase to about 87 gigawatt (GW) from 61 GW.

Its installed capacity is expected to increase to about 228 GW from 122 GW, according to the rolling plan 2027-28, Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) report by the Central Transmission Utility (CTU), a wholly owned arm of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

The projected peak power demand for Tamil Nadu by 2027-28 is lower than the 27,392 MW expected for 2026-27.

The rolling plan report has been prepared to assess the transmission system adequacy in the ISTS for the 2027-28 time-frame, CTU said. Tamil Nadu will have the highest peak power demand among the southern States. However, Andhra Pradesh will see the maximum annual growth of 7.7%, it said.

During the system studies for the 2027-28 time frame, a few short-circuit issues were observed in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh because of large inter-connections, CTU said.

Some transformers were also observed to be loaded beyond limit in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. Most of these inter-connecting transformers are located in Tamil Nadu.

New network expansion schemes and mitigation measures to address the issues in the Southern Region are being taken up on a continuous basis and would be taken up in the subsequent rolling plan after a detailed analysis. CTU said overloads were observed in locations with renewable energy potential and measures to control these loadings should be planned in a coordinated manner. Cumulatively, by 2027-28, transmission schemes, at an estimated cost of ₹36,568 crore, are expected to be added to the grid from the Southern Region. The projected peak power demand for Tamil Nadu by 2027-28 is lower than the 27,392 MW expected for 2026-27, according to the ISTS rolling report for 2026-27.

TTD acts against fake websites found to be duping pilgrims

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUPATI

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has got 41 fake websites shut down and rendered 13 mobile apps ineffective, as they were found to be involved in duping the pilgrims at Tirumala.

Considering it as the largest "virtual offensive", the temple management has shut down the websites bearing names that have striking similarity to its official website – tirupatibalaji.ap.gov.in.

The devotees, upon reaching Tirumala, find that they have been taken for a ride after standing in the queue and getting their tickets scanned at the temple.

Such an awkward situation not only burns a hole in their purse, but also sentimentally affects the devotees, as they find it hard to return home without the darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

The TTD regularly shares its darshan-related information on its website as well as on its official Facebook, Instagram and YouTube accounts to keep the pilgrims updated. The TTD has initiated action by contacting the the State government and the agencies hosting websites and domain registrars.

More than a story

False narratives and propaganda should be countered, but not through a ban

The demand for a ban on *The Kerala Story*, a film apparently based on the instances of a few women joining the Islamic State, is ill-conceived. It is to the credit of the Supreme Court and the High Courts of Kerala and Madras that they did not yield to the clamour for proscribing the movie. It garnered adverse publicity because of a teaser that made an exaggerated claim that 32,000 girls have gone missing in Kerala, presumably to join the terrorist group. However, the film-makers have agreed to withdraw the teaser and carry a disclaimer that the film's content is fictional. The film's more notable feature is that it has been denounced as undisguised propaganda. Those seeking the ban accuse its makers of trying to stoke communal passions and the projecting of a fake narrative against Muslims. However, even if that is true, any ban on the film will be counter-productive. Bans can be overturned by courts, and they tend to evoke curiosity about the film and often end up making more people form opinions on its content. In effect, it enhances the propaganda value, and furthers the ulterior motive, if any. It is now legally settled that once a film has been certified by the statutory authority, there is really no case to ban one. Laws pertaining to public order indeed empower the police and local authorities to stop a film's screening, but it will be perilous to do so every time a group demands a ban.

Reports from Tamil Nadu and Kerala suggest that threats of protests have resulted in multiplexes and some cinema owners choosing not to screen the film. It is normally the local authorities who have a duty to provide adequate security, as ruled by the Supreme Court. However, rather than the law, it is prudent assessment of the ground situation that helps them make a decision. What is also condemnable is the attempt to make political and electoral capital out of *The Kerala Story*. The Prime Minister himself has alleged that only those who support terrorism will criticise such a movie. It does not behove high constitutional functionaries to communalise the debate over the film. Protests against an allegedly false narrative about a State or a community will not amount to backing terrorism. The fear that the film purportedly grapples with – that young people may be targeted for radicalisation – should be addressed by isolating extremist elements and fostering better understanding among communities. The mischief wrought by a false projection of reality is best undone through exposing the falsehood and the underlying motive, and not through hasty bans.

New king, new things

Charles III must adopt modern values while carrying on with royal traditions

In the first coronation in the country in 70 years, a lavish ceremony comprising 2,300 guests including more than 100 heads of state, Charles III has been crowned King of the United Kingdom. The event marked the culmination of plans that were set in motion last September upon the passing of King Charles' mother, Queen Elizabeth II. During the seven decades of her reign, emerging post-colonial nations grew in self-confidence, and some challenged the idea of the Commonwealth, while at home, the traditional public deference to the monarchy faded, requiring the members of the royal family to reposition themselves as good Samaritans working towards the greater good of British society. King Charles, in his prior avatar as the Prince of Wales, was quick to embrace the successive waves of change, particularly when it came to climate change and the environment. As a passionate supporter of sustainable ecosystems and architecture, he has advocated for organically maintained parks and natural reserves in the U.K. Under the aegis of the Prince's Trust, which operates under a royal charter to help disadvantaged youth in the U.K., more than a million young people had benefited by 2020.

While the new king has made a name for himself in the climate and social welfare spaces, he will have to work hard to tackle rifts within the royal family, potentially deal with an independence movement in Scotland, and face up to the long-standing challenge of Commonwealth nations that no longer wish to have the U.K. monarch as their head of state. Within the Windsor clan, King Charles's younger son Prince Harry has renounced his royal trappings and moved to California with his American wife Meghan Markle, and his recent novel, *Spare*, does not mince words in spelling out deep-seated resentment that he claims they felt while at the palace. The King will have to either make peace with the new arrangement forced by Prince Harry or build bridges with his second son. In Scotland, Humza Yousaf has now taken the reins of the Scottish National Party after the long tenure of Nicola Sturgeon. While the party has numerous internal issues to resolve, there is a distinct possibility of another independence referendum, which would pose sharp challenges to the U.K.'s economy and society, particularly in a post-Brexit context. King Charles would also have to engage with Commonwealth nations such as Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, the Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica and St. Kitts and Nevis – nations that have signalled their intention to appoint their own heads of state. To tackle and effectively deal with these challenges, King Charles III will have to continue to embrace modern values while carrying the mantle of hoary royal traditions.

With COVID-19 'over', applying the lessons learnt

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya

is a consultant physician and epidemiologist. He is the founder-director of the Foundation for People-Centric Health Systems, New Delhi

Approximately 1,192 days since January 30, 2020, when COVID-19 was announced as a 'public health emergency of international concern', the World Health Organization, on May 5, 2023, declared that COVID-19 was no longer a public health emergency of international concern. In simpler terms, COVID-19 has acquired the status of other endemic diseases. India, arguably, reached the COVID-19 endemic stage a year ago.

Even so, there have been 'knee-jerk' and unscientific responses to spikes in COVID-19 cases in India, the most recent example being the response in March-April 2023, when there was an uptick in viral flu and SARS-CoV-2 cases, which led to the closure of schools in some Indian cities and States. In instances where schools were not closed, their managements made mask wearing a mandatory condition for children to attend classes. This, in some instances, happened without a formal government directive, indicating implicit endorsement.

Misinformation during the second wave

In April-May 2021, there was a COVID-19 misinformation blitzkrieg: that a 'third wave in India would affect children'. Since then, there has been a tragic tale – of children being deprived of schooling and learning, and repeatedly being asked to mask-up. Two years later, in April 2023, school closure and making masks mandatory for schoolchildren had their origin in nearly identical challenges of actions not being supported by scientific evidence, misinformation, and social media influencers (not necessarily subject experts) shaping the public discourse, which was again not effectively addressed by governments.

In late April 2023, the not-for-profit Foundation for People-Centric Health Systems, which is based in Delhi, analysed the trends and stance of influencers and experts on social media platforms and in newspaper reports on the COVID-19 linked mask enforcement for schoolchildren.

Those based out of India were analysed into three sub-groups: trained or practising public health experts and epidemiologists (including those with a medical degree); other medical doctors (excluding those already in first group) and super-specialists such as hepatologists, cardiologists/cardiac surgeons and endocrinologists; and everyone else including media personalities, parents and those affiliated with schools. The fourth group was of those who had had an opinion about India but living abroad, irrespective of their education.

> The response to any future disease outbreak and epidemic, not just COVID-19, should be guided by a nuanced understanding of epidemiology

In the subgroup of trained public health experts and epidemiologists were concerned, there was near consensus that schools should not be closed, and, further, that there was no role in making mask wearing mandatory for children. Most clinicians and infectious diseases were a bit more supportive of masking, but very few supported universal masking for any age group. In the sub-group of super-specialists, there was greater endorsement of mask wearing for children and of school closure. Even though there was no pattern among mediapersons and parents, news stories and headlines often had a tangent of 'playing to the gallery' of the core readership of that platform. Interestingly, 'experts' and influencers living outside India were making more definitive and stronger arguments for school closure and mask wearing for children in India. As a matter of fact, the countries where they lived did not have, to a large extent, any restrictions. These disparate viewpoints existed despite cumulative epidemiological evidence that children are least at risk of moderate to severe COVID-19, so they should be the last group (if at all) to wear a mask, only when everyone else was universally wearing a mask. In fact, at the endemic stage, there is no role of universal and mandated masking for any age-group. Just because masks are beneficial and there is the virus around, it does not mean that everyone should be made to wear a mask, mandatorily.

Local context matters

Second, in outbreaks and epidemics, policy interventions and preventive advice need to factor in the local context. The context determines the epidemiological pattern, spread of disease and proposed interventions thereof. China faced a wave in December 2022 but no other country did. Switzerland, in April 2023, decided not to continue with any more COVID-19 vaccination. Many countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States have decided to drop nearly all pandemic-related restrictions. None of those moves was/is wrong but those countries had/have made decisions based on the local context. However, that does not mean every other country should do exactly the same thing. The sub-groups of super-specialists and those staying abroad failed to factor in the 'local context' while coming up with their opinions.

Third, an extremely worrying and unsettling trend has been the ' dogmatic stand' that many 'self-proclaimed experts' and influencers have adopted, and who are continuing to selectively and conveniently use emerging evidence and published literature to support their stand. A few influencers have positioned themselves as 'super-reviewers' of scientific studies and use social media platforms to find limitations and criticise even the most robust studies, thereby misguiding gullible followers, as academic researchers do not get the opportunity to write rebuttals to such tweets that are often biased and serve as echo-chambers for the influencers. What these self-proclaimed experts and influencers (most often with no formal training to interpret such data) often fail to factor in is that no scientific study is ideal. The findings of a new scientific study should always be interpreted in the overall context of the cumulative body of evidence and not in isolation.

Fourth, if there were the 'COVID deniers' at the beginning of the pandemic posing a challenge, it is now the 'COVID-foreverers', i.e., a group of disparate individuals and social media groups that keep insisting on the enforcement of restrictions such as universal masking at 'the drop of the hat', often on frivolous grounds. Misinformation, irrespective of the origin, is likely to be an ongoing challenge even in the COVID-19 endemic period and there is a need for sustained efforts to tackle such misinformation.

Looking ahead

With the WHO announcement, COVID-19 has 'officially' transitioned from a population-level challenge to more of an individual health concern. It is time for calm assessment, to shift the gears and also apply the lessons from the last three years. One, considering the immense interest in epidemiology, the government should offer formal training courses on the principles and practice of epidemiology to prepare India for more nuanced responses to outbreaks and epidemics and to curb misinformation. Two, the government needs to integrate the COVID-19 response to general health services. There is no role of universal measures against COVID-19 to be enforced. Three, India's response to surges, outbreaks, and epidemics (of any infectious disease and not just COVID-19) should be guided by a nuanced understanding of epidemiology and not unduly derailed by 'social media influencers'. Four, children were never at risk from moderate to severe COVID-19. Therefore, in future, schools should not be closed for a COVID-19 uptick. And wearing masks in order to attend school should never again be made mandatory. Most importantly, it is time to drop the COVID-19 fixation and move on to tackle other more pressing health challenges in the country.

A position paper, China's image, and what it means

Harsh V. Pant

is Vice-President for Studies and Foreign Policy at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi and Professor at King's College London

Shivam Shekhawat

is a research assistant at the Observer Research Foundation

In early April this year (12-13), the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China (PRC) Qin Gang, along with his counterparts from Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan met in Samarkand for the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan's neighbouring countries. The meeting coincided with the release of a position paper by Beijing on its policy in Afghanistan. Titled, 'China's position on the Afghan Issue', the 11-point paper is important for two reasons, the first *vis-à-vis* China's involvement in Afghanistan, it gives a clear indication of Beijing's policy towards the crisis-ridden country and the areas it will prioritise in its engagement with the Taliban moving forward. Beyond Afghanistan, the paper is reflective of China's recent efforts to refashion how it is viewed internationally – from a country bent on disrupting the current world order to one which is heavily invested in addressing 'international hot button issues' objectively with no motivations to further its vested interests, unlike America.

The context of the policy choices

The paper first delineates the core principles which inform Beijing's policy choices – the 'Three Respects' and 'Three Nevers', i.e., China respects the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the 'independent choice', religious sentiments and national customs of the Afghan people. These principles are put in opposition to the policies followed by the West which, according to Beijing, are informed more by geopolitics and their vested interests.

As per China, Afghanistan is currently transitioning from a period of turbulence under a United States-backed government to relative stability under the Taliban. A consistent trope throughout the paper is the West's failure in fulfilling its commitments to the country. Its decision to intervene militarily and enforce its conception of democracy without taking into account the distinct characteristics of Afghanistan is blamed for starting the crisis in the first place. Deriding the U.S. for imposing unilateral sanctions and illegally freezing Afghanistan's foreign reserves, China calls for a reversal of these actions. In response to Washington's failure to introspect, Beijing commits to help Afghanistan move towards a more sustainable form of economy.

> Beijing's position paper, on its policy in Afghanistan, is reflective of its recent efforts to present China as a nation that is now heavily invested in addressing 'international hot button issues'

Using groupings without the U.S., its allies

Urging the international community to view the Afghan issue in a 'comprehensive, balanced and objective manner', China advocates using alternative regional groupings which do not include the U.S. and its allies, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Moscow Format Dialogue, the Foreign Ministers' group which just met, and the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue, for discussing the Afghan issue. This will help Beijing in promoting an alternative model as opposed to the battered approach of the West, allowing it to focus more on its priorities and form a consensus among Afghanistan's neighbours.

Framing its involvement in purely humanitarian terms, good neighbourliness and mutual respect for its neighbours, Beijing has avoided acknowledging its own interests in the country. It blames the current turmoil in the world, with the presence of multiple crises and renewed competition, for forcing it to adopt a 'proactive approach', arguing how countries are urging China to take charge as the U.S. has abdicated its responsibility. This characterisation of its actions is done to mask how stability in Afghanistan is also important for Beijing to attain its own security and economic interests in the country and to present a counter to U.S. hegemony, both politically and financially.

For China, the threat of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan and its potential to harm Chinese interests and personnel are very real. Calling for a bilateral and multilateral approach to respond to the 'Three Forces' of terrorism, extremism and separatism, China urges the Taliban, regional countries and the international community to crack down on terror groups, specifically the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, and help Afghanistan in augmenting its counterterrorism capabilities. The question of refugees and narcotics and their cross-border trafficking are also highlighted. Owing to its strategic location, Afghanistan is also economically very important for China: for its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and due to the presence of vast mineral resources.

Since the beginning of 2023, China has taken incremental steps to entrench its image as a major country playing a crucial role in ensuring global governance and providing a 'moderate and pluralistic environment' for dialogue. The release of the concept paper on the Global security initiative and the peace proposal on Ukraine which preceded the position paper on Afghanistan signal Beijing's quest to modify its image and solidify its role as a responsible mediator. Its apparent success in bringing Iran and Saudi Arabia to the negotiating table and the visits by leaders from Europe are projected as an indicator of Beijing's growing influence.

While the Taliban have welcomed the paper and China's 'long-term political support' to the country, China's success in Afghanistan will remain contingent on what it could offer to the Taliban. China's high-sounding rhetoric on the linkages between Afghanistan and China has failed to materialise into an increased footprint on the ground. For India, China's continued engagement with Russia and Iran, along with the Central Asian countries will be consequential in understanding how their policies will shape and what it would mean for India's interests in Afghanistan.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Manipur and musings

The ongoing violence and civic unrest in Manipur are most unfortunate. There could be many socio-political crosscurrents in play there, be they of ethnicity or any other. What is troubling is that churches are being pulled down as illegal construction. The scene would shift to Kerala where, in contrast, Christians are being avidly wooed. If the former is called for in pursuit of the cause of righteous civic administration, the latter, perhaps, is as much for an equitable and inclusive governance. And then, across the seas, we are witness to a practising Hindu Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, reciting from the Bible on a king's coronation. The temporal and the spiritual would lack the viscosity of the secular that readily takes the shape of the vessel in which it is poured.

R. Narayanan,
Navi Mumbai

The Karnataka campaign

Of late, campaigning by the national party that is in power at the Centre has become all the more egregious, with religious polarisation becoming an inalienable and vicious part of its electoral politics. The Election Commission's selective targeting of the other national party in contention, and which is in the Opposition, for alleged violations of electoral code are a matter of grave consternation. One cannot help wonder what the priorities for the ruling national party and its top leader are with their total focus on the Karnataka election, and a conspicuous silence on ethnic violence in Manipur, our defence personnel under attack in Kashmir and the issue of the protest by India's wrestlers at Jantar Mantar in Delhi.

S.K. Choudhury,
Bengaluru

A belligerent Bhutto

Going by the tone and the tenor of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan to a range of questions on a gamut of festering issues, it is clear that India will have a very tough time engaging in talks with Pakistan. India has to be cautious in dealing with its neighbour.

K. Chellappan,
Chennai

A memorable Saturday

Many compliments to Chennai Super Kings for a convincing win against Mumbai Indians at Chepauk in Chennai, in their crucial encounter on Saturday. It was a game of clinical performance by CSK that soon had Mumbai Indians on the back foot. Once again, it was the disciplined start from Ruturaj Gaikwad and Devon Conway which paved the way for CSK's victory. The army of CSK's Chennai fans will certainly thank the rain gods as the weather held on a day when CSK broke the Chepauk jinx against Mumbai Indians.

A.P. Thiruvadi,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

Will the greenback still be green?

As China, India, and Russia dabble in trade using partner currencies for payment instead of the U.S. dollar, various media are rife with speculation about the demise of the dollar as world reserve currency. How much truth is there to this claim? Not much.

Parag Waknis

is Dean, International Affairs, and Associate Professor of Economics, Dr. B R Ambedkar University Delhi

The rise of the dollar

The status of the U.S. dollar as a preferred currency for international trade and as a reserve currency has not been a result of any purposeful policy or an international agreement. The rise of the dollar as the world currency closely aligns with the rise of the U.S. as one of the world's strongest economies with a deep financial system and a stable government. This is not to say there were no competitors. Starting with the Great Britain Pound to the emergence of the euro as the currency of the European Union, the position of the dollar has been challenged from time to time. However, the dollar seems to continue its dominance uninterrupted.

According to reports from the International Monetary Fund, the dollar's share of foreign exchange reserves has fallen over time from 80% in the 1970s to about 60% in 2022. The euro has made up for about 20% of the remaining 40% room created by this fall. Smaller currencies such as the Australian and Canadian dollars, Swedish krona, and South Korean won have claimed their share in the portfolios of various countries' foreign exchange reserves making up most of the remaining gap of 20%, with Chinese currency taking up the rest.

China runs a closed capital account, which explains why it still does not feature as a prominent choice in which to maintain reserves. Most of the Renminbi reserves that are held outside China are by Russia. In fact, both these countries accumulate the currency of the other as foreign exchange reserves. From that point of view, a trading arrangement between China and Russia makes more sense. However, even though India's biggest supplier of oil is Russia followed by Saudi Arabia and Iraq, its biggest trading partner is still the U.S., according to recent data. Moreover, Russia's importance as an oil supplier is a result of the deep discounts offered by its oil suppliers to Indian refiners. Such discounts will not be sustainable over the long run. This further casts some doubt on the long-term viability of a common currency or a reciprocal trading arrangement between China, India, and Russia as geopolitical compulsions push India closer to the U.S.

Dollar-denominated assets

Along with general acceptability as a medium of exchange for international trade, the U.S. dollar is also in demand because of demand for dollar-denominated assets worldwide. The debt issued by the U.S. government is bought by many countries across the world as a hedge against currency fluctuations affecting valuation of reserves. U.S. government debt and other dollar-denominated assets also serve as a quality collateral in international transactions. Additionally, many currencies are pegged to the U.S. dollar and a few countries use the dollar as their own currency. This has meant that a huge proportion of U.S. dollars reside outside the U.S. China itself has substantial U.S. dollar reserves earned from its trade with the U.S. over the past three decades, which in turn has fuelled its economic might across the globe. It has used these dollar reserves to fund its strategic investments abroad. All this feeds into the demand for the dollar and strengthens its importance in the international financial system. Any currency competing for the position of the U.S. dollar as international reserve currency will have to provide these additional services as well. That is not a trivial task that can be achieved over a shorter time period.

The fight of countries to substitute the U.S. dollar with their own currency as a world currency is understandable. Being a supplier of international reserve currency confers a distinct advantage on the government issuing it – the ability to borrow at a low interest rate. As U.S. government debt is in high demand worldwide, it gets issued at the lowest interest rate. This relaxes the fiscal constraint substantially, boosting the debt-issuing government's capacity to borrow more without having to deal with the negative effects of such borrowing on the domestic economy. This phenomenon is often referred to as the dollar premium and is something that many other governments would like to have access to, including that of China and Russia.

Thus, the run of the U.S. dollar as an international reserve currency is far from over. The only serious contender at this point is the euro, which stands second but at quite a distance. The possibility where the Chinese currency or any other common currency could become a serious contender is thin and distant at this point. This not to say that the current system is optimal and should not be improved on. However, to expect that from a common currency between China, India, and Russia or any such reciprocal trading arrangement would be an exaggeration.

The run of the U.S. dollar as an international reserve currency is far from over

REUTERS

Improve technology to detect IEDs

IEDs are among the most potent tools deployed by the Maoists

STATE OF PLAY

R.K. Vij

Ten jawans and a civilian driver, who were returning in a van following an anti-Maoist operation, were killed in a blast caused by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada on April 26. The IED was planted beneath a metalled road. The was so forceful, it created a huge crater on the road.

Though this attack, which according to the State police had been carried out by the proscribed Communist Party of India (Maoist), is under investigation, the larger issues of the use of IEDs and of tackling such devices must be seriously addressed at different levels – the government, industry, the Maoists, and the security forces – despite the government's claim that the base of the Maoists has shrunk and violence has decreased.

IEDs are among the most potent tools deployed by the Maoists. Even a small formation of the Maoists can cause huge damage to the security forces by using an IED. Therefore, the recent theft of about 7,000 detonators by suspected Maoists from West Singhbum, Jharkhand, is alarming.

The technical equipment used by the security forces to detect IEDs has its limitations. If the quantity of metal in the IED is low or the IED is planted deep under the road, mine detectors may fail to find it. Though hundreds of IEDs are detected and diffused every year, the search party could always miss a few due to technical reasons. Ground-penetrating radar, which can detect recent disturbances in the soil subsurface, has also not proved successful because it is

susceptible to generating false alarms. As not much research and development has been undertaken in this field, the Central government and industry must join hands to improve technology to detect IEDs. Also, the details printed on boxes containing detonators are not sufficient to trace the source of the detonators and punish the guilty. The Central government must, therefore, amend rules and make the manufacturers accountable for unique identification of detonators.

The disrespect of the Maoists even for slain jawans is no longer surreptitious. In January 2013, during the autopsy of a jawan, an IED was found implanted as a booby trap inside the abdomen, in Latehar. India is a signatory to the Geneva and Hague Conventions which regulate the means employed during warfare, so that casualties are checked. The Maoists deliberately and grossly violate international humanitarian laws – the use of landmines is banned internationally as they are non-discriminatory, lack precision and cause unnecessary or excessive suffering.

It is well known that in addition to the security forces, many civilians, including children, and animals have also been victims of IED attacks. In the April 26 incident, the body parts of the 10 jawans and the driver were found strewn everywhere, making it difficult to collect them and hand them over to the grieving families in a respectable manner. India must raise the issue of the use of IEDs by the Maoists at appropriate international platforms so that the Maoists are forced to respect international humanitarian laws and stop using these devices. This may be taken up despite the fact that the armed struggle of the Maoists does not technically fall under the ambit of 'internal armed conflict,' which the Maoist sometimes claim.

The latest reports indicate that the current focus of the Maoists is to intensify the use of booby traps, snipers (with telescope) and remote IEDs. Previously, before elections, the Maoists would not only plant numerous IEDs, but also make thousands of 'spike holes' in jungle areas to inflict fatal injuries on jawans. The technical department of the Maoists seems to have gradually developed technology to remotely blast the IEDs. The use of technology such as unmanned aerial vehicles and drones may be useful to check suspicious movement, but the security forces need to improve their tactics too.

Knowing that the Maoists have also blasted mine protected vehicles in the past, the use of vehicles should be permitted only after securing the road from ambushes and IEDs. A visual search must be carried out cautiously or deep enough, up to about 100-150 metres on both sides of the road, to check the presence of suspicious elements or wire ends. Every effort needs to be made to detect, diffuse or avoid these brutal devices.

R.K. Vij is former Director General of Police of Chhattisgarh. Views are personal

Most women who got divorced were pushed towards it

The share of divorced women who faced sexual abuse from their husbands during marriage was two times higher than what currently married women face

DATA POINT

Rebecca Rose Varghese & Vignesh Radhakrishnan

On May 1, the Supreme Court said that in cases of a marriage being "wrecked beyond hope of salvage," the cooling-off period of six to 18 months would only "breed misery and pain." It held that its extraordinary discretion under Article 142 of the Constitution can be used to provide justice for couples trapped in bitter marriages.

This judgment may help ease the suffering of Indian women who wish to be divorced. Data show that a higher share of divorced/separated Indian women endured emotional, physical and sexual harassment from their most recent husband than currently married women. A higher share of divorced/separated women also experienced restrictions on their mobility and had a limited say in their spending decisions during their marriage compared to currently married women. A higher share of divorced women had faced suspicion from their (then) husbands during marriage. These conclusions are based on the National Family Health Survey-5.

The share of divorced women who experienced emotional violence (insults, humiliation, threats) from their most recent husband during marriage was two times higher than currently married women **(Table 1)**. The share of divorced women who experienced sexual violence (42.9%) was also twice the share of currently married women (27.3%). Similarly, the share of divorced women who experienced physical violence during pregnancy was two and a half times higher than currently married women **(Table 2)**.

About 21% of divorced/separated women were accused by their most recent husband of being unfaithful during the marriage compared to 10.1% of currently married women. Similarly, the share of divorced/separated women who experienced marital control by their husbands, when the couple was together, was much higher than the share of currently married women **(Table 3)**. So, data show that in most cases, the decision of women to separate from their husbands was a result of years of physical and emotional abuse. And the perception held by some that "couples break the nuptial tie for flimsy or selfish reasons" in recent times, as observed by the Kerala High Court in September last year, is not true for a majority of the cases.

The recent Supreme Court judgment will help women to move on with their lives quickly, as data show that the share of divorced women who were employed was much higher than currently married women. As shown in **Table 4**, 49.1% of divorced/separated women were employed compared to only 26.6% of currently married women. Their freedom of movement was much higher than currently married women **(Table 5)**. Moreover, they had a higher say over monetary decisions, with 72.8% divorced women allowed to make their own spending decisions **(Table 6).**

While the share of divorced/separated women who faced abuse from their most recent husbands was high, it is important to note that the share of currently married women who endure such pain are only relatively small in number. Over 30% of currently married women have faced either emotional, physical or sexual violence in their lives. Close to 80% of them have never revealed this to anyone, which partly explains the very low divorce rates in India.

Moreover, while divorced women have gained relatively more autonomy after divorce, their freedom is not absolute **(Table 5)**, with only around 70% of them allowed to go alone to many places and have money that they can decide how to use.

Left with little choice

The charts were collated from data sourced from the fifth edition of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted between 2019 and 2021

Table 1 | Experiencing violence: Share of women who experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence in the hands of their husband/most recent husband

Marital status	Emotional violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Physical or sexual violence	Emotional, physical or sexual violence
Currently married	13.2%	27.3%	5.8%	28.3%	31%
Divorced/ separated/ deserted/ widowed	**26.9%**	**42.9%**	**13.4%**	**43.6%**	**46.4%**

Table 2 | Experiencing violence during pregnancy: Share of women who experienced physical violence during pregnancy

Marital status	%
Currently married	2.9
Divorced/ separated/ deserted/ widowed	7.2

Table 3 | Marital control by husband: Share of women whose husband...

Marital status	...is jealous or angry if she talks to other men	...frequently accuses her of being unfaithful	...does not permit her to meet her female friends	...tries to limit her contact with her family	...insists on knowing where she is at all times	...does not trust her with money
Currently married	25.7%	10.1%	19.7%	15%	19%	20.5%
Divorced/ separated/ deserted/ widowed	**35.7%**	**21%**	**23%**	**23.4%**	**24.3%**	**26.9%**

Table 4 | Women's employment status: Share of women...

Marital status	...employed in the 12 months preceding the survey: Currently employed	...employed in the 12 months preceding the survey: Not currently employed	...not employed in the 12 months preceding the survey
Currently married	26.6%	5.4%	68.1%
Divorced/ separated/ deserted/ widowed	**49.1%**	**8.7%**	**42.3%**

Table 5 | Freedom of movement: Share of women who were allowed to go to...

Marital status	...the market	...a health facility	...the village/ community	...all three places
Currently married	57.5%	53.5%	51.1%	43.6%
Widowed/ divorced/ separated/ deserted	**79.9%**	**76.1%**	**74.3%**	**68.8%**

Table 6 | Women's access to money: Share of women who have access to...

Marital status	...money that they can decide how to use	...a bank or savings account that they themselves use
Currently married	53.6%	79.9%
Divorced/ separated/ deserted/ widowed	**72.8%**	**87.6%**

rebecca.varghese@thehindu.co.in, vignesh.r@thehindu.co.in

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 8, 1973

Lok Sabha clips another 'princely' privilege

New Delhi, May 7: Members of the former Princely order to-day lost in the Lok Sabha another privilege – that of mentioning the name of their former State after their personal name. The House decided that a member of the former princely order should be described exactly as any other member of the House, with "Shri" or "Shrimati" prefixed to his or her name. It was against the Home Ministry's practice of appending the name of the State of the ex-ruler after the name. The Speaker, Mr. G.S. Dhillon, ascertained the consensus of the House on the subject when it was raised by Mr. H.N. Mukherjee (CPI) and Mr. Era Sezhiyan (DMK). Mr. Mukherjee said that in one of the question lists of the House, a "peculiar method of nomenclature" had been adopted in regard to some members. After the name of Shrimati Gayatri Devi the words "of Japiur" had been added. Similarly, there were other names like "Shrimati Krishna Kumari of Jodhpur", "Mr. Martand Singh of Rewa", "Shrimati Vijaya Raje Scindia of Gwalior" and "Honorary Major Narendra Singh of Panna." It was a laughable, but indirect way of trying to circumvent the resolution on abolition of privy purse and other princely privileges, Mr. Mukherjee said. "In involves discriminatory description of citizens of this country." Mr. Mukherjee said they had learnt that the Home Ministry, "in its wisdom" had decided on this kind of discriminatory nomenclature. Would it not be peculiar if Mr. Sezhiyan were to call himself as "Mr. Era Sezhiyan of Madras" or he himself were to add to his name "of Calcutta."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 8, 1923

In S. Africa

Capetown, May 7: In the Senate, Mr. Munnik moved that the Government be requested to take immediate steps firstly to repatriate all Indians who may be desirous of returning to India as speedily as possible. Secondly to set apart areas where only Indians may reside and thirdly to establish bazaars for living and trading purpose of Indians on the outskirts of the different towns where such may be found necessary. Mr. Duncan, Minister of Interior, accepted the last two clauses and initiated the necessary legislation would be introduced next session.

From Page One

22 drown, many missing in boat capsize in Kerala

The State government cancelled all its official programmes scheduled for Monday in view of the tragedy. It also postponed the taluk-level adalats being held across the State, said Chief Secretary V.P. Joy. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will visit Tanur on Monday.

Minister for Tourism P.A. Mohammed Riyas and Minister for Sports V. Abdurahiman were coordinating the rescue work. District Disaster Management Authority chairman and District Collector V.R. Premkumar coordinated the revenue, police, health, and Fire and Rescue Departments.

Fire and Rescue Services units from Tanur and Tirur joined the rescue and search operation by the local people.

Mr. Abdurahiman said the death toll was likely to increase. There were nine bodies at one hospital alone, and three of them were women and five children.

Manipur remains tense as many flee to safety

Manipur appointed a new Chief Secretary, requesting that IAS officer Vineet Joshi be repatriated to his parent cadre from Central deputation to the Union Education Ministry in order to take up the role. Authorities in Manipur's Churachandpur district, one of the worst affected districts, relaxed the indefinite curfew for three hours from 7 a.m. for people to fetch essential supplies.

The unrest had started from areas near the boundary between the Kuki-Zomi tribe-dominated Churachandpur and the majority Meitei-dominated Bishnupur, following a tribal solidarity march on May 3, which was meant to protest a Manipur High Court order directing action be taken toward granting ST status to the Meiteis.

Mr. Singh said there was a considerable improvement in law and order situation in the State in the past two days and curfew relaxations were made in Imphal city on Sunday for two hours. He said that district police chiefs have been asked to identify miscreants and take strict legal action by either binding them down or arresting them. Thirty people have been arrested so far, he said.

Officials in other northeastern States said that about 2,000 people, mostly from the Kuki-Zomi group of tribes, have taken refuge across seven relief camps in southern Assam's Cachar district, while more than 200 have crossed over to the Saitual and Vairengte districts of Mizoram. Providing special buses, Nagaland evacuated about 600 of its citizens from strife-torn Imphal and about 110 people, mostly students, have returned safely to Meghalaya through special flights organised by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma.

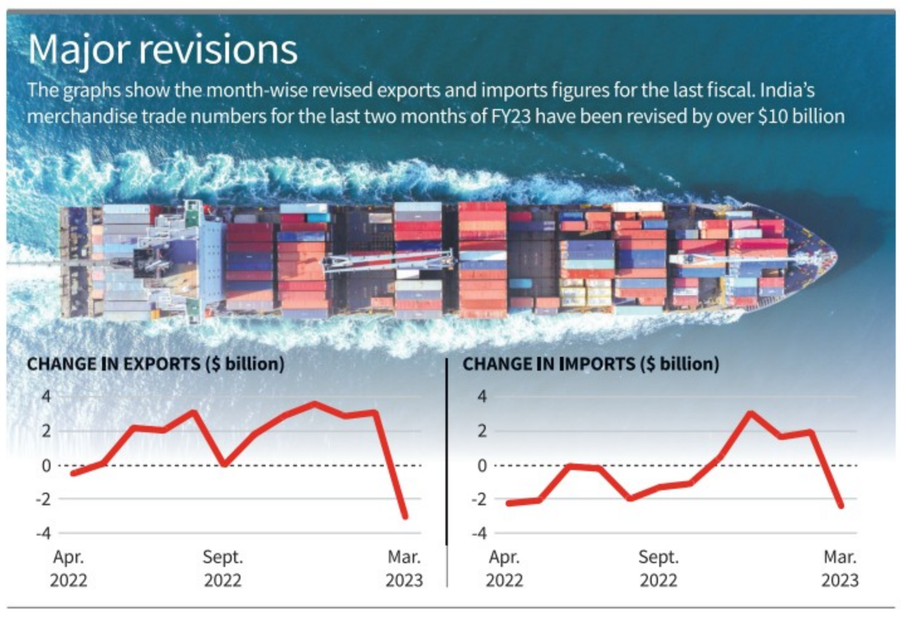
Mr. Singh said that despite the improvements, mobile Internet would remain suspended for now. "Today, we took a call to not restore mobile Internet in the State. In some areas, broadband is available, and people are using it," he told *The Hindu*. He added that three people, including a woman, were killed in firing by security forces on the night of May 5 in Churachandpur district. "A security situation has developed in the area following some rumours. Assam Rifles opened fire in which three people were killed," he said.

The retired officer said Article 355 of the Constitution has not been promulgated. He said 134 weapons looted from the police armoury since May 3 have been recovered. A defence spokesperson said over 25,000 people have been shifted from the conflict zones to the operating bases of the security forces and military garrisons, while surveillance in the riot-hit districts has been enhanced.

Fresh data rejigs drag down 2022-23 export-import tally by $3 billion

Numbers for February and March were revised by over $10 billion, with trade deficit for the year rising 40.8% to $267.45 billion, a little more than the estimated 40%; experts say revisions amounting to over $500 million a month are not normal

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI



India's goods trade numbers for February and March have been revised by over $10 billion from initial estimates, and the overall export-import figures for last year have been scaled down by around $3 billion dollars each, with experts flagging petroleum shipments as the main driver for the extraordinarily high revisions of recent export data.

While exports were earlier reckoned to have grown 6% in 2022-23 to hit $447.46 billion, that number has now been pared to $444.4 billion, reflecting a 5.3% rise from 2021-22. The import bill for last year has also been scaled down from $714.24 billion to $711.85 billion, indicating a growth of 16.1%.

In numbers

The trade deficit for the year has risen 40.8% to $267.45 bn, slightly higher than the 40% estimated earlier.

For February, goods exports have been revised higher by almost $3.1 billion from the initial estimate of $33.9 billion to about $37 billion. The month's import bill was raised by over $1.93 billion, the second-highest upward revision for a month, after a $3.08 billion uptick from December's initial estimate.

For March, by contrast, exports seem to have been scaled down by $3.03 billion from the initial $38.38 billion estimate to $35.35 billion, translating into a sharp 20.7% dip year-on-year, pegging outbound shipments' value at almost the same level as March 2021. Imports for the last month of 2022-23 have also been revised downward by around $2.4 billion to $55.72 billion.

'Not normal'

"Data revisions amounting to over $500 million a month are not normal, but we have been seeing significantly higher revisions over the past year and a half compared to the period before that," Vivek Kumar, economist at QuantEco Research told *The Hindu*.

Interestingly, the revisions in the export numbers are largely dominated by changes in the figures for petroleum exports, Mr. Kumar said. The revisions in core export items or segments like gems and jewellery have been insignificant by contrast.

That India's oil imports from Russia went up after the Ukraine conflict may be part of the trigger for the fluctuating petroleum trade numbers.

However, Mr. Kumar pointed out that the sharp revisions on the petroleum exports front had begun four-five months before the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February 2022.

"It is very puzzling and raises uncertainty on the outlook for India's current account deficit and thereby rupee. With average monthly upward revision in net trade deficit to the tune of $1.5 bn, the cumulative for the year could add up to $18 bn. Such sizeable revision in trade deficit data turns analysis somewhat challenging," the economist said.

"One would appreciate greater understanding of the trigger for the higher data revisions in recent months and the context for greater concentration of these revisions in the petroleum sector," he stressed.

SC urged to hold daily trials in cases against MPs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is considering an *amicus curiae* report which has recommended holding day-to-day and exclusive criminal trials of MPs and MLAs, noting that 5,097 cases are pending against lawmakers across the country.

Of these, more than 40% – 2,122 cases – have been pending for over five years, noted a report submitted by senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, before a Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud.

"As per report of the Association for Democratic Rights (July 2022), 236 out of 542 Lok Sabha members (44%), 71 out of 226 Rajya Sabha members (31%) and 1,723 of 3,991 State legislators (43%) have criminal cases against them," the amicus, assisted by advocate Sneha Kalita, informed the court.

Mr. Hansaria said that the "large pendency of cases against sitting as well as former Parliamentarians and State Legislators" was a serious issue.

The apex court has scheduled a hearing in July.

Meghalaya party merges with Conrad Sangma's NPP

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The merger of the regional political party People's Democratic Front has increased the number of MLAs of the National People's Party in Meghalaya to 28. The NPP is three seats short of a simple majority in the 60-member Meghalaya House.

Led by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, the NPP won 26 seats in the February 27 Assembly election, up from 19 in 2018, while the six-year-old PDF won two.

Mr. Sangma called the merger a marriage between the two parties after romancing for five years, after sigining the merger with PDF chief Gavin Miguel Mylliem.

SC status for Dalit converts: former CJI says inquiry commission can finish task in a year

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Former Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan, who heads the Inquiry Commission into whether Dalit converts to religions other than Sikhism or Buddhism should get Scheduled Caste status, on Sunday said his panel could deliver its report in a year, and that too before the election year of 2024.

At the same time, the retired judge said the Inquiry Commission had not yet been provided with "all the facilities".

"All the facilities have not been provided... Office space has been provided, other things are not... If work starts, it [the report] will take only a year, that is what I feel. It will finish before 2024," Justice Balakrishnan told *The Hindu* in a phone interaction on Sunday.

However, Justice Balakrishnan denied any delay on the part of the government in providing the facilities. "The government is moving," he said.

The commission has been given two years to complete its task.

The former Chief Justice's confidence in finishing the assigned task in a year may be significant in a debate that rages in the Supreme Court on whether it should wait for the Justice Balakrishnan Commission report to come out before deciding a series of petitions seeking Scheduled Caste status for Dalit converts to Christianity.

These petitions have been pending in the court for 19 years. The government has asked the Supreme Court to stall till the Justice Balakrishnan Commission report is out. However, the court sounded sceptical in the last hearing on April 12.

K.G. Balakrishnan

"You may have one commission today and another tomorrow. Different political dispensations may come and bring different political ideologies to the issue. Twenty years have gone by. So much material has been collected through the years. Now, you constitute a new Commission. Tomorrow, this commission may also end up with the same scenario," Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul had told the government.

"Let us hear this case which has been pending for 19 years. Why shy away?" Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, the other judge on the Bench, had observed.

He had disagreed with the government's assessment that the 2007 report of the Justice Ranganath Misra Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities was "flawed". "Are you sure? You probably need to re-check. It is not that perfunctory. You are making a generalised statement on this report," he had said in court.

The 2007 report had recommended that Dalits who converted to Islam and Christianity to escape caste oppression in the Hindu religion should be permitted to avail SC reservation benefits in government jobs and educational institutions. The government had argued that the Ranganath Misra report was "myopic" and composed within the "four walls of a room".

The petitioners' lawyers, including senior advocates C.U. Singh and Colin Gonsalves and advocates Prashant Bhushan, Franklin Caesar Thomas, had urged the court to not wait for the Justice Balakrishnan report. They said the Ranganath Mishra Commission had provided enough "authoritative empirical data".

Indian prisoner dies in Pakistan a week before repatriation

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Zulfiqar was set to be released from prison, along with one other civilian and 199 fishermen

An Indian prisoner, who was to be repatriated next week, died in a hospital in Karachi, civil society activists revealed on Sunday.

The deceased, Zulfiqar, was expected to enter India along with 199 fishermen set to be released by Pakistan. India has been urging Pakistan to release the 631 fishermen and two civilian prisoners languishing in Pakistani jails even after completing their prison terms.

A representative of Pakistan India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD) said that Zulfiqar, one of the two civilian prisoners on the list, was admitted to a hospital in Karachi where he passed away on Saturday.

According to PIPFPD, at least 654 Indian fishermen are in Pakistan's jail; 631 of them have completed their sentences. In comparison, 83 Pakistani fishermen are in Indian jails.

The tragedy notwithstanding, the repatriation of the 199 fishermen and one civilian is expected to go ahead without difficulty next week.

"They will be released on 11th and enter India on 12th," said Jatin Desai of PIPFPD.

The fishermen and civilian prisoners have been part of India-Pakistan diplomacy for decades.

Apart from the fishermen, India has been urging Pakistan to provide consular access and release 22 civilian prisoners who have completed sentences but continue to remain in jail.

Govt. mulls over all-woman marching contingents, bands for R-Day parade

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The Centre is looking to have all-woman marching and band contingents, tableaux, and other performances at the Republic Day Parade, 2024 on Kartavya Path. An Office Memorandum issued on March 1 in this regard has since undergone several changes but effort is on to have contingents with mostly women participants, defence sources said.

However, this has raised several questions within the military fraternity as it is not clear how infantry and armoured regiments of the Army will be able to have all-woman marching contingents as neither division has women – be it as officers or in the ranks.

The decision was made in February at the de-brief session on RDP, 2023, chaired by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and attended by members of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), services and other Ministries and departments.

Women Agniveeer, undergoing training, were part of the Naval contingent for the first time at this year's parade. FILE PHOTO

"After the detailed deliberations, it has been decided that the Republic Day 2024 will be having only women participants in the contingents (marching and band), tableaux and other performances during the Parade at Kartavya Path," the memo said.

Therefore, all the participating Ministries, departments, organisations and agencies are requested to start the preparation accordingly right away, it stated, adding that progress in this regard may be apprised to MoD time to time.

Since the original memo, there have been several deliberations on the issue and the government effort is to have predominantly women contingents, a defence source said, adding that discussions are still on. A copy of the memo went viral on social media over the past few days and has had several veterans expressing apprehensions over the proposal.

Women officers had been part of RD parades in the past and had led contingents, while women Agniveeer, undergoing training, were part of the Naval contingent for the first time this year. The services do not have women in the soldier ranks, barring a small number of women Military Police in the Army.

The Navy's decision to induct women Agniveers is the first broad opening. Last month, the first batch of five women officers was inducted into the Regiment of Artillery.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the posting of women officers with Engineer Regiments of the Territorial Army (TA) along the Line of Control (LoC) and as staff officers at TA Group Headquarters/Directorate General of Territorial Army at New Delhi, as per organisational requirement, the Ministry said on Sunday.

Karnataka polls: EC issues advisory on advertisements

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the May 10 Assembly election in Karnataka, the Election Commission (EC) on Sunday asked political parties not to publish any advertisement in the print media on the day of the election and the day before without prior certification.

In an advisory to all national and State political parties in the fray, the poll body said that advertisements during the silence period will have to be pre-certified by the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC).

Separately, the EC also wrote to editors of newspapers in Karnataka that the Press Council of India's norms for journalistic conduct held them responsible for all matters, including advertisements, published in their newspapers.

On Saturday, following a complaint by the BJP, the commission had issued notice to the Congress over its corruption rate card advertisements published in newspapers.

The poll body sought empirical evidence to prove its allegations.

The Congress has been issuing full-page advertisements in leading dailies, accusing the BJP of allowing inflation to destroy household budgets in Karnataka and the rest of the country. The advertisements listed the rise in prices of essential commodities such as cooking gas, petrol, diesel, rice, milk, and cooking oil.

On May 2, the EC had taken serious note of the "plummeting" level of campaign discourse for the Karnataka Assembly polls and had asked political parties to exercise restraint and focus on "issue" based debates.

‘Surveillance, vigilance needed, as COVID-19 is here to stay’

Former WHO Chief Scientist says evolution of the virus is unpredictable amid waning immunity and human behaviour with regard to precautions; she adds that COVID-19 infrastructure — from genomic surveillance to primary healthcare to risk communication — should be repurposed, not dismantled to prepare for emerging infections, and officials should be proactive in communicating health risks

INTERVIEW

Soumya Swaminathan

Ramya Kannan

Nearly three-and-a-half years after the January 2020 declaration of the World Health Organization (WHO) that the COVID-19 outbreak constituted a public health emergency of international concern, the body decided to downgrade that status, announcing last week that COVID is no longer such a concern. There is great curiosity about what this means for the world, particularly if people and nations can let down their guard, exhaustingly held up for the past three years. The WHO’s former Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan, currently chairperson of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, weighs in on the issue. Excerpts:

Is the recent declaration by the WHO, that COVID is no longer a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, a sign of hope? Or are there layers to this?

We have not reached the end of the pandemic; what is over is the acute phase of the pandemic, which had been characterised as a public health emergency of international concern, which has now been lifted by the WHO. So it’s no longer considered a public health emergency, but the WHO DG [Director-General] did warn that it is still a global threat. There are a couple of reasons for that. First, the evolution of COVID is still unpredictable. We could have at any time, a variant that is not only more transmissible but could also cause an increase in clinical severity of disease. So the only way ahead is to be prepared – continue the monitoring, the surveillance, especially the genomic surveillance, and correlate that with the clinical and epidemiological findings, to give early warning of changes in virus behaviour.

If at any time, any country reports that they have seen a variant, or a recombinant, that has properties of increased clinical severity, then the WHO might go back again to this public health emergency situation. For the next couple of years, I would say, till this virus actually settles into a pattern, which it has not yet done, we cannot be sure of what is next – its next form and what it will do. And this is why I think it is really important to explain to people that we are not out of COVID-19, that it is here to stay. But we could still face some surprises, so we need to monitor and adapt our responses as the situation demands.

The other factor is the waning of immunity. Whatever immunity we now have today, because of vaccines and natural immunity, is expected to wane over a period of time. For something like influenza, we are now used to an annual vaccine, particularly for high-risk groups, and every year, the vaccine’s composition changes. We don’t yet know if COVID is going to require something similar.

Are we going to need a variant-adapted vaccine every year, every couple of years – particularly for the high-risk groups – to protect us from severe disease, or is the immunity we have today going to last us for many decades or lifelong? That question can only be answered over a period of time.

The third variable is human behaviour. During the first two years of the pandemic, people were very guarded. People wore masks, they avoided unnecessary gatherings, they minimised travel. Clearly, all that is no longer happening. People are gathering in large numbers for social and work-related reasons, there is international travel; therefore, chances that new variants

will spread quickly are also very high. These are the reasons why we need to continue to be quite cautious and vigilant.

Will the government have to put down a policy for COVID vaccination now?

As of now, the policy is for people to get their primary dose of vaccination, which is two doses, plus a third dose or a booster dose. This itself, in many countries, has been at a very low rate of uptake, including in India, where I think it is under 20% for the third dose, and that even in the high-risk groups, about 30%.

We have had a number of variants in the past year and a half, but all within the Omicron family, and studies have shown that the original vaccines still have a high degree of protection against severe disease. But what we can clearly see now is that they do not protect us against infection, and that many people are getting infected, reinfected, etc., with every new strain which is a little more transmissible than the previous one.

What this is telling us is that we still do not have the perfect vaccine that prevents infection and disease. So we still need to search for that; whether we are going to need to adapt it every year is still an open question.

The WHO’s technical advisory group on COVID vaccine composition will inform us whether we will need new and adaptive vaccines.

You tweeted about not dismantling systems that have been set up for COVID. Can physical infrastructure be repurposed into other health uses?

Countries have to move into a modality of dealing with COVID along with the other health challenges, including other infectious diseases. It’s a very good opportunity to not dismantle what was built, but to see how it can be integrated and streamlined, including being prepared for emerging infections.

One good example is the genomic surveillance network (INSACOG) that India set up. We have a network of scientists who have been working together analysing the data and providing reports in real time. If this can now be integrated into a respiratory disease surveillance, or integrated viral disease surveillance network, then the capacity we have built, along with the expansion of public health labs that the government is investing in, can be put to good use, efficiently and cost-effectively.

If these laboratories can put out regular reports to the public – on which virus is circulating, who is it likely to infect, what are the clinical features and what is the treatment – we can also avoid the use of unnecessary antibiotics and inform people of the right preventive methods to use.

The other aspect is risk communication. Health departments have to be constantly monitoring topics that the public is discussing (including on social media), and be proactive in terms of communicating health risks. This is not just for outbreaks and viruses, but in general for health.

The third is the clinical care pathway, starting from the primary healthcare level, and the health and wellness centres. What do community health officers do if they see somebody with warning signs? Where do they refer the patient to, who will admit the patient? Is oxygen available?

I am very happy to see that the Health Ministry now has a good document on how to manage people with post-COVID symptoms. That’s the kind of thing we need – guidance for both private and public sectors, on following protocols, avoiding use of unnecessary antibiotics, steroids and drugs that are not effective.

I would like to stress the importance of diagnosing, managing and preventing non-communicable diseases. People who have underlying risk factors are at much higher risk for COVID and post-COVID complications.

Then we need to think about research and development, including developing more antivirals. We have to be prepared, as I said, for not just a new variant of COVID, but something new, a new virus tomorrow, avian flu, anything can come along. We need to check if our systems are ready. How long will it take us to produce a diagnostic test, or a vaccine?

Your message for the people – what precautions should they take?

Today, we have the knowledge and the tools to deal with COVID, just as we deal with many other infections. People need to use that knowledge to the best of their ability to protect themselves and their families.

For an individual, I think it means doing your own risk assessment. Do you have factors that make you more susceptible for severe disease? Have you been vaccinated? Have you had your booster dose, the third dose? If you are somebody who is more vulnerable, or you have a very elderly person at home, then you would continue to wear masks, especially in closed and crowded settings. People need to know that it is still good to wear a mask, and you must wear a mask if you have a cough and cold, whether it is COVID or not.

It makes public health sense to wear a mask if you have a cold and cough and if you’re going out, so that you protect others. Hand hygiene is extremely important.

(For full interview: bit.ly/soumyaTH)

Former IPS officer Karuna Sagar joins RJD in Bihar

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

To break the perception of being a party of Muslims and Yadavs, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) on Sunday roped in Karuna Sagar, a Bhumihar and 1991-batch IPS officer from the Tamil Nadu cadre.

Mr. Sagar retired as Director-General of Police, Welfare, in Tamil Nadu in April, and formally joined the RJD on Sunday in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav and senior party leaders.

The move to rope in Mr. Sagar is seen as an attempt to attract upper caste voters, who traditionally support the BJP. The party is likely to make Mr. Sagar its candidate in the 2024 Lok Sabha election from the Jehanabad constituency.

SC to hear plea for SIT probe into Manipur violence today

Petition alleges that situation in State is extreme and attacks have support of the ruling party; it says government should be directed to compensate the tribal people and reconstruct churches

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud is scheduled to hear on Monday a petition filed by a Delhi-based body for Manipur tribal communities seeking the constitution of a Special Investigation Team to investigate the attacks and violence which has gripped the northeastern State.

The petition, filed on Saturday was urgently listed for hearing, on Monday.

The petition filed by the Manipur Tribal Forum said the situation in the State was “extreme” and these “attacks had the full support of the party in power in the State as well as the Centre which supports the dominant group and has planned the attacks on account of a non-secular agenda”.

It has urged the court to direct that the SIT be headed by a former DGP of Assam to probe and prosecute the crimes.

“The assaults have also spread to Delhi where the Kukis in Delhi are also coming under attack by the dominant community. Similar attacks are also taking place in Meghalaya,” it said.

“Petitioners have a few videos and photos of the assailants during the assault on the tribals and some of these videos and photos show burning of churches, beating of tribals and assailants walking around with semi-automatic weapons, which is surprising because even the police force would not be in possession of such modern and deadly weapons,” the petition said.

It said there was also a spread of online hate speech. It has asked the apex court to order a team to be put together to conduct an inquiry into the villages burnt and assess the value of property destroyed in the violence. The petition said the State should be directed to compensate the people and reconstruct the churches.

“Thirty tribals were killed by the dominant community and 132 injured... Neither FIR was registered nor was there any investigation taking place as the police itself is on the side of the dominant community and has stood by idle while the killings took place,” the plea alleged.

The forum has urged the court to direct an SIT to be headed by a former DGP of Assam to investigate and prosecute the crimes.

Install CCTV cameras in offices of investigative agencies by July 18, says SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has given the Centre three months, setting a July 18 deadline, to comply with the directions in its December 2020 judgment to install closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras in the offices of its investigative agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation, the National Investigation Agency and the Enforcement Directorate for the sake of transparency and protection of human rights of accused and undertrial prisoners.

A Bench led by Justice B.R. Gavai noted how “disheartening” it was that several agencies had not taken any steps to comply with the court order. “It is disheartening to note that insofar as the Union of India is concerned, out of seven investigating agencies, no steps of sincere nature have been taken in case of four investigating agencies,” the top court observed in a recent affidavit.

‘Non compliance’

The court directed that in case the Centre chose not to comply and file an affidavit, “the Secretary (Home), Union of India, shall remain personally present before the court on the next date of hearing to show cause as to why an action for committing contempt should not be taken against them”.

In its latest order, the court noted that the Centre and the States were yet to fully comply with the judgment.

“This is not an adversarial litigation. When this court had issued directions, in order to maintain transparency at the police station and the officers of the investigating agencies, the Union of India and the State Governments/Union Territories ought to have complied with the directions,” the Bench said.

The order noted that only two Union Territories – Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Ladakh – as well as the States of Mizoram and Goa have fully complied with the directions, making budgetary allocations as well as actually installing the CCTV cameras.

No curtailment of any democratic value system in India, says Dhankhar in U.K.

Press Trust of India
LONDON

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar has said that there is no curtailment of any democratic value system in India. He has said that democratic systems are flourishing as never before, and stressed that it is incumbent upon Indian students based in the U.K. to counter false narratives about the country.

Mr. Dhankhar, who arrived here on Friday, joined an estimated 100 heads of state and government from around the world, invited to attend the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Westminster Abbey on Saturday.

Global perspective: Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar interacting with Indian students in London on Saturday. PTI

Before his departure, Mr. Dhankhar interacted with U.K.-based Indian students at an event organised by the Indian High Commission on Saturday.

He said India was proud of their achievements, and asked them to play the role of goodwill ambassadors of the country.

He went on to highlight the many strides made by the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and stressed its strong democratic credentials.

“India takes its position on global affairs on its own understanding, for its own welfare and world peace. India is emerging as a superpower,” he said.

Reiterating his call to the wider diaspora population he interacted with on Friday, he said, “If you don’t approve of it, you must antidote it. A false narrative about such a vibrant democracy is antithetical to our national interest if we don’t react. And, I have no doubt, the most powerful reaction always comes from rational minds.”

Mr. Dhankhar said India becoming the most populous country in the world was a great advantage as it had learnt the art of leveraging the demographic component by registering economic progress. “From a global perspective, our DNA is so strong that there is no challenge to our intellect,” he said.

Government of Tamilnadu
State Rural Roads Development Agency
PMGSY III (2022-23) Batch I
Construction of Long Span Bridges

1. For details, visit **www.pmgsytenderstn.gov.in** *2.* e-Bids are invited by the Additional Collector (Dev.) / Project Director, DRDA of Chengalpattu, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Kallakurichi, Krishnagiri, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Perambalur, Sivagangai, Thanjavur, Theni, Tiruchirappalli, Tiruvannamalai, Tiruvarur, Tuticorin, Villupuram and Virudhunagar districts for Construction of Long Span Bridges, package wise, under two cover system. *3.* The Package wise bid documents can be downloaded at free of cost from **www.pmgsytenderstn.gov.in** from 08.05.2023 to 07.06.2023 *4.* Common Date and Time for downloading of Bid document, submission and opening

(i) **Last Date and Time for downloading and Online submission of Bid Documents**	**07.06.2023 Up to 03.00 PM**
(ii) **Date and Time of online opening of Bid Documents**	**07.06.2023 04.00 PM onwards**

DIPR/2469/Tender/2023 — **Commissioner,** Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department.
“சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்”

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E-mail :qc.kmscl@kerala.gov.in, website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in
CIN: U24233KL2007SGC021616

No. KMSCL/QC/4746/2023 Date :08.05.2023

EMPANELMENT OF NABL APPROVED DRUGS TESTING LABORATORIES
INVITATION OF EOI

The Kerala Medical Services Corporation invites Expression of Interest for ‘Empanelment of NABL approved Drugs Testing Laboratory’ for the year 2023-25 for testing of Drugs & supplies

Sl no:	EOI no.	Date & Time of pre-offer meeting	Last date and Time of receipt of offers	Date and Time of opening of the offers
1.	KMSCL/QC/ EOI/2023/01	20.05.2023 11.00am	05.06.2023 02.30 pm	05.06.2023 03.00 pm

The EOI document can be downloaded from the official website of the Corporation www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in

(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (EOI Inviting Authority)

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 27/2023-24/SE/PHC/MVPA, JJM-CWSS to Marayoor and Kanthalloor panchayaths in Idukki District - Package II - Supply and laying clear water pumping mains, construction of sump cum pump house, construction of GLSR at various zone,supply and erection of pump sets, providing distribution system and providing FHTC to various zones - Marayoor and Kanthalloor Panchayath (Pambar River zone. **EMD :** Rs. 500000, **Tender fee :** Rs. 16540, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 29-05-2023, 04:00:pm, **Phone :** 0485-2835637, **Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**

KWA-JB-GL-6-205-2023-24

Superintending Engineer
PH Circle, Muvattupuzha

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, वृत्त-भरतपुर

क्रमांक : 144 दिनांक : 24.04.2023

निविदा संशोधन (Corrigendum)

इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 97 दिनांक 17.04.2023 से जारी निविदा सूचना सं. 01/2023-24 जिला भरतपुर में नगरीय निकाय योजनान्तर्गत कुल 06 पैकेज निर्माण कार्य के अन्तर्गत वर्णित तिथियों में अपरिहार्य कारणों से निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है जिन्हें वेबसाइट www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in एवं www.sppp.raj.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

विवरण	पूर्व में प्रकाशित तिथियां	संशोधित तिथियां
ऑनलाइन निविदा फार्म मिलने की तिथियां	दिनांक 19.04.2023 प्रातः 09.30 बजे से दिनांक 02.05.2023 सायं 06.00 बजे तक	दिनांक 19.04.2023 प्रातः 09.30 बजे से दिनांक 11.05.2023 सायं 06.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाइन निविदा फार्म जमा कराने की तिथियां	दिनांक 19.04.2023 प्रातः 09.30 बजे से दिनांक 02.05.2023 सायं 06.00 बजे तक	दिनांक 19.04.2023 प्रातः 09.30 बजे से दिनांक 11.05.2023 सायं 06.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाइन निविदा खोलने की तारीख	दिनांक 03.05.2023 अपराह्न 03.00 बजे कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सा.नि.वि. वृत्त भरतपुर	दिनांक 12.05.2023 अपराह्न 03.00 बजे कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सा.नि.वि. वृत्त भरतपुर

नोट :- निविदा की शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।
NIB No. : PWD2324A0140

PWD2324WLRC00579	PWD2324WLRC00580	PWD2324WLRC00581
PWD2324WLRC00582	PWD2324WLRC00583	PWD2324WLRC00585

DIPR/C/6196/23

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि. वृत्त-भरतपुर

INBRIEF

India records 2,380 fresh COVID-19 cases, 15 deaths

India on Sunday logged 2,380 fresh COVID-19 infections, while the number of active cases came down to 27,212 from 30,041 the day before, according to Union Health Ministry data. With the fresh cases, the COVID-19 tally increased to 4.49 crore. The death toll climbed to 5,31,659 with 15 fatalities, the data updated at 8 a.m. said. At 27,212, the active cases make up 0.06% of the total infections. The national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.75%, the Ministry said. The number of people who have recuperated surged to 4,44,10,738. PTI

IRDAI set to tighten norms for ad campaigns by insurers

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is proposing to tighten norms for insurance advertisements, by assigning higher responsibility on the senior management of insurers in designing and approving media campaigns for product promotion. Under its proposed amendment to the 2021 directives on insurance advertisements, each insurer must set up an advertisement committee, which should report to a product management committee. Both panels will be fully responsible for releasing the advertisements, the draft said. The IRDAI has invited comments from stakeholders on the proposal by May 25. PTI

Assam doctor couple arrested for abusing minor 'daughter'

The Assam police have arrested a doctor couple in Guwahati on charges of abusing a four-year-old girl, who, child rights activists said, was their illegally adopted daughter. An activist said there were multiple complaints against the couple – identified as Sangeeta Datta and Walliul Islam – but there was no evidence until one of their neighbours approached the police with photos of the child bound to a post on the terrace in the heat. The couple's domestic help, who was detained, said she was asked to tie up the girl for being disobedient and naughty, the police said. The doctors were held under the Juvenile Justice Act and various sections of the IPC.

NCGG expanding capacity to train more foreign officers

The National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) in New Delhi is expanding its capacity to train more civil servants from different countries, with a rise in demand for its programmes such as those in public policy and governance, the institute said on Sunday. Set up in 2014 by the government as an apex-level institution under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the NCGG has so far imparted training to civil servants from 15 countries, namely Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, Tunisia, Seychelles, Gambia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Laos, Vietnam, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal and Cambodia. PTI

Farmers and wrestlers give 15 days to arrest WFI chief

Decision taken at meeting attended by leaders of Samyukt Kisan Morcha and khaps; hundreds of protesters turn up at Jantar Mantar; movement to be intensified if demands are not met

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Various farmer leaders joined the wrestlers protesting against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP, Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, at Jantar Mantar here on Sunday and gave a 15-day ultimatum to the government to arrest him for alleged sexual harassment. They said the future course of action would be decided after that.

The decision was taken at a meeting, attended by representatives of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, khap leaders, wrestlers and members of a 31-member committee that is advising the players on their movement, on the sidelines of a mahapanchayat organised in the national capital in support of the grapplers.

More support: Protesting wrestlers holding a candlelight vigil at Jantar Mantar on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Addressing pressperson after the meeting, Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said another meeting had been scheduled for May 21 and if Mr. Singh were not to be arrested by then, the leaders would take a "big decision" to intensify the movement.

Various wrestlers, including Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia, have been protesting against Mr. Singh. At the press conference, Ms. Phogat said their protest had not been hijacked by the farmer leaders, but the "elders have only extended their support to our fight".

'Outside backing'

Mr. Tikait said the wrestlers would take decisions related to the protest and that the farmer leaders would only support them from outside. "Every day, members of various khaps will come to Delhi for the protest and return by the evening," he added.

Other farmer leaders such as Khap Maham 24 chief Mehar Singh and Samyukt Kisan Morcha (non-political) leaders Baldev Singh Sirsa were among the hundreds of protesters who joined the grapplers during the mahapanchayat.

ISRO to start online training programme for college students

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced a new introductory-level online training programme called space science and technology awareness training (START).

START is aimed at postgraduate and final-year undergraduate students of physical sciences and technology.

Academic institutions can submit applications for the programme through the Jigyasa portal by May 20.

The programme will cover various domains of space science, including astronomy and astrophysics, heliophysics and sun-earth interaction, instrumentation and aeronomy. It will be delivered by scientists from Indian academia and ISRO centres.

"The START programme is part of the ISRO's efforts to enable Indian students to become professionals in space science and technology, as the organisation's space science exploration programme continues to expand into new domains," the ISRO said.

The programme is intended to give them an overview of the different facets of the field, research opportunities and career options, it said.

Remote sensing courses

The ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) has also announced two short courses – remote sensing data acquisition and remote sensing data processing.

The courses are scheduled to be held from August 21 to September 1 and October 9 to 20 respectively, at NRSC's Earth Station at Shadnagar near Hyderabad.

Panjwar's killing in Lahore reminiscent of rival's murder in 2020

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

Centre has named the chief of the Khalistan Commando Force a designated terrorist under UAPA

Paramjit Singh Panjwar, the Pakistan-based chief of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), was killed in Lahore on Saturday in a manner similar to the murder of his rival Harmeet Singh "PHD" of the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) in the city over three years ago.

In the early hours of Saturday, accompanied by two armed guards, Panjwar was taking a walk in a park in Johar Town when two assailants struck. One of them shot him in the head and the two escaped.

On January 27, 2020, Harmeet Singh was gunned down close to Dera Chahal gurdwara on the outskirts of Lahore.

Indian security agencies suspected that Panjwar's murder was the fallout of a rivalry for control over drug money by him, Pakistan-based pro-Khalistan groups that he led and Ranjit Singh Neeta of the Khalistan Zindabad Force.

"Such elements have been involved in the smuggling of drugs and firearms from Pakistan to India. In the past few years, drones are being used to drop the consignments," an investigating agency official said.

Once a bank employee

Born on April 21, 1960, Panjwar worked in a central cooperative bank in Sohal village of Punjab. Radicalised by his cousin Labh Singh, he joined the KCF in 1986. The same group had claimed responsibility for the assassination of General Arun Shridhar Vaidya, Chief of the Army Staff during Operation Blue Star, in Pune in August 1986.

After the Indian security forces eliminated his cousin, Panjwar took charge of the outfit around 1990, and escaped to Pakistan through the Rajasthan border in 1996. He started raising funds by smuggling weapons, heroin and fake currency notes into India.

The Home Ministry on July 1, 2020, declared Panjwar a designated terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

In solidarity: A protest outside the house of Amartya Sen at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, in Birbhum district of West Bengal on Sunday. DEBASISH BHADURI

Protests continue over 'disrespect' to Amartya

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

A group of intellectuals and Trinamool Congress leaders have been holding protests against Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, outside the house of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen over the past few days.

The protests began on Saturday over a notice issued by the university to Dr. Sen, asking him to vacate part of the land on which his house 'Partichi' is built.

"The protests will continue till Rabindra Jayanti on Tuesday. We are protesting against the disrespect to Amartya Sen. For the past four years, students and faculty members have been targeted by the Vice-Chancellor of Visva-Bharati and the protest is a culmination of all such actions," Minakshi Bhattacharya, a student leader associated with the Trinamool's student wing, told *The Hindu*.

On Friday, a procession was held, which culminated at the house of the Nobel laureate.

On Saturday, prominent intellectuals, including painters such as Shuvaprasanna and Jogen Chowdhury and singer Kabir Suman, participated in the sit-in outside Dr. Sen's house. On Sunday, a demonstration under the banner 'Visva Bharati Bachao Committee (Committee to Save Visva Bharati)' was held at the same spot.

The protests continued despite the Calcutta High Court's stay on the eviction notice. The court on May 4 directed the District Judge, Birbhum to hear the stay application on May 10, and added that till then, the order of the university would not be enforced.

Dr. Sen is likely to return to Visva-Bharati from abroad n June.

Govt. plans will hit LIC adversely, says staff forum

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

All India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA) general secretary Shreekant Mishra said on Sunday that despite the sterling performance of the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), attempts were being made by the Union government and the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to bring in certain policy changes which would adversely affect the interests of the LIC.

At a press conference here, Mr. Mishra said the Centre was likely to amend the insurance laws, and through the amendments, expected to alter the minimum capital requirement, commission structure, and grant more licences.

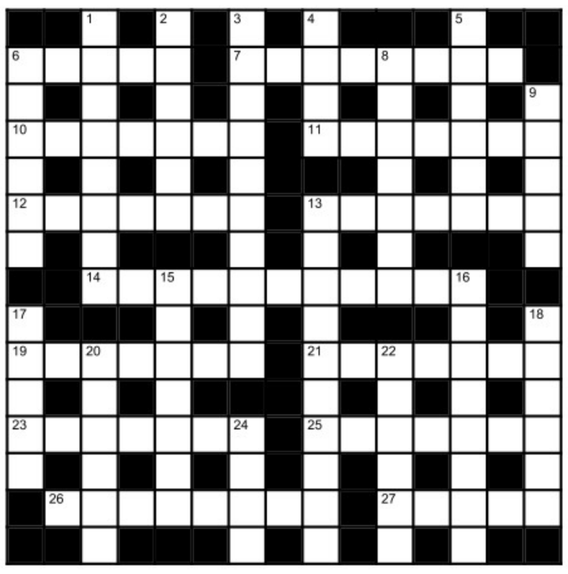
"The government is taking the insurance sector to the pre-1956-era, which would make this sector vulnerable to fraudulent practices, endangering people's savings. The IRDAI is also planning to crowd the market by announcing that it is likely to issue licences to nearly 20 more companies both in life and non-life business," he said.

TH CROSSWORD + 13859

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

6 Spacious, low penetration year round (5)
7 One records girl's inclination (8)
10 Without using any liquid one ironed pants (7)
11 Food grain stored here in record number, but it's a small quantity (7)
12 Excavates flower holders (7)
13 Set on lake bed (7)
14 Foul air protects dinosaur (11)
19 Most affected in Paris, it's taking current (7)
21 She had covered robe, back to front (7)
23 Investor invested into producing hybrid fruit (7)
25 "Sleep with hard hat" - perhaps it originated from a refinery (7)
26 Appendages - girl follows a standard (8)
27 Five in Paris said to be in harmony (5)

Down

1 Disappointing episode, they say nobody attended (8)
2 Extremely moody and angry in the city (6)
3 Preserve lineage, it could be glowing (10)
4 Bet on essentially moderate pace (4)
5 Stone remains, one stuck in between sides (6)
6 War and destruction in the country... (6)
8 ...See those suffering in the country (7)
9 Man destined to be caught within range (5)
13 Careful drinking - Italian woman gets some wine (10)
15 Nice naked bird coming up - most of it is still under water (7)
16 Inspection, they say reveals the fastener is too small (8)
17 One's pretty sharp (5)
18 Covering empty stomach, suppressing fever (6)
20 Capital line? (6)
22 Ignore surgical procedure (6)
24 Feel good bringing some of them up to see (4)

SUDOKU

9		2		7	8		3	
6		4	5	3			8	
							7	
		7						1
			8	2	7			
3						4		
	6							
	1			8	2	9		6
	8		4	6		2		3

No.SS5792 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

■	S	C	A	R	L	E	T	L	E	T	T	E	R	■
G	■	O	■	O	■	X	■	A	■	W	■	L	■	S
A	G	L	E	T	■	A	B	S	T	I	N	E	N	T
M	■	O	■	T	■	C	■	T	■	R	■	C	■	A
E	G	G	B	E	A	T	E	R	■	P	E	T	I	T
O	■	N	■	R	■	■	■	I	■	■	■	R	■	E
F	I	E	L	D	E	R	■	T	O	R	N	A	D	O
T	■	■	■	A	■	E	■	E	■	E	■	■	■	F
H	E	A	D	M	E	N	■	S	E	A	G	I	R	T
R	■	P	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	R	■	D	■	H
O	B	O	E	S	■	U	N	D	E	R	M	I	N	E
N	■	S	■	T	■	N	■	O	■	A	■	O	■	A
E	N	T	R	A	N	C	E	D	■	■	N	O	T	E	R
S	■	L	■	I	■	E	■	O	■	G	■	I	■	T
■	R	E	C	R	U	D	E	S	C	E	N	C	E	■

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	8	7	1	2	4	9	6	3
6	2	4	7	9	3	8	1	5
1	9	3	8	6	5	2	7	4
4	1	8	2	5	6	7	3	9
2	7	9	3	4	8	6	5	1
3	6	5	9	1	7	4	8	2
7	5	2	6	3	9	1	4	8
9	4	6	5	8	1	3	2	7
8	3	1	4	7	2	5	9	6

FAITH

Sundarar and Siva

Many of our saints and preceptors established a relationship with God and carried on in life with God as a presence. The standard one is dasyam; then there is the satputra mata (where one is the child). There is also the sakhiya marga, as shown by Arjuna and Krishna. In the same line, this margam is also exemplified in Saivism by Sundaramurthy Nayanar or Sundarar, one of the 63 Nayanmars, Dr. Sudha Seshayyan said in a discourse.

The Tiruvarur temple attracted legions of saints and scholars, who daily gathered in a mandapam near the eastern tower of the temple, and it behoved of one scholar/saint to bow to others. However, Sundarar refused to do so, leading a lot of friction. One day, Viranmindar, also a Nayanmar, informed Sundarar that he could not enter the temple without acknowledging the others. A furious Sundarar proceeded to go around the temple from outside. Soon, he heard a voice calling out, "Nambi Arooran" (Sundarar's name). He looked closely and found the deity on top of the northern gopuram, offering him darshan.

Sundarar asked Siva for 12,000 gold coins, which the Lord provided, and when the saint wondered how to carry the load back to Tiruvarur, Siva advised him to drop the sack of coins in Manimutharu river. "It will reach the Kamalalayam pond in Tiruvarur," the Lord said. On reaching Tiruvarur, Sundarar, along with his wife, reached the pond and sang eight stanzas, starting with "Pon seidha meniyineer". However, the coin sack did not arrive, and seeing his wife laughing at his belief, Sundarar beseeched Siva. The gold coins floated to the top of the pond.

Generating alpha returns

THINKINVESTOR

Betting on alpha returns can have either a positive or a negative impact on the investor depending on the returns generated by the managers of active funds

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

The decision on whether to invest in a passive fund or an active fund is not easy. Investing in a passive fund appears behaviourally optimal and investing in an active fund can generate additional returns.

In this article, to help you make a mindful choice between passive and active funds, we discuss how alpha returns could impact your life goals.

More or less

Alpha is the difference in returns between an active fund and its benchmark index. Suppose an active fund generates 14% return against the benchmark return of 13%, the fund is said to have generated a positive alpha of one percentage point.

Consider investing in an active fund from a perspective of a goal-based portfolio. Suppose along with adequate bank deposits, an index fund generating 12.75% can help you accumulate wealth to make down payment to buy a house. Then, an active fund generating 14% return would help you make the down payment and pay for the plush interiors of your dream house.

On the flipside

There is also a flipside to investing in active funds. Portfolio managers must bet on stocks that they believe will outperform other stocks in the benchmark index. Taking such bets means investing more in (overweighting) some stocks and less (underweighting) in others in relation to the weights of these stocks in the benchmark. If such active bets turn correct, the fund will generate positive alpha. If such bets go wrong, the fund will generate negative alpha. From the perspective of your goal, negative alpha could mean you fail to accumulate enough money to make the down payment for the house. Of course, you can still buy the house by borrowing more or liquidating investments earmarked for other goals.

Conclusion

Consider the behavioural side to your investment decision; generating positive alpha can make you happy whereas earning negative alpha can lead to pain. The level of pain because of falling short of accumulating the required wealth to achieve a goal can be more than the level of happiness from earning greater returns.

This argument is especially true for high-priority goals such as funding child's education. Your decision to invest in active fund must, therefore, be based on two factors. One, your confidence in identifying active funds that have greater chances of generating positive alpha during the time horizon for your life goal. And two, the behavioural mindset to understand that pain can dominate (negative alpha) pleasure (positive alpha).

(The author offers training program for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Navigating high interest rates

Private equity firms are sailing in rough waters with the era of loose monetary policy of 2020-21 almost coming to an end along with the excess financial froth it brought in its wake

PRIVATE EQUITY

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

Private equity (PE) firms seem to follow the footsteps of their cousins – special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs) – by stumbling through a rising rate environment.

PE firms work to take a public company private (example Dell) or acquire a private company and take the company public.

They generally acquire underperforming companies and focus on improving management, operations, and financial position over a few years.

PE firms raise capital from institutional investors, pension funds and high net worth individuals and use leverage to magnify returns. For example, if an investment opportunity for the PE firm costs ₹100 and yields ₹10, that amounts to a 10% return on investment (ROI).

However, the ROI would be 20% if the PE firm paid ₹50 and leveraged the other ₹50 (as the return on ₹10 is calculated on 50 as the base principal).

Shell companies

SPACs, on the other hand, act as a shell company which raises money to acquire a company at better valuations or take a company public. However, the funds would be returned if the SPAC facilitator could not find a suitable company within 18-24 months. The increase in interest rates over the past year has decimated start-up valuations (start-ups were taken public by SPACs for lofty valuations). Moreover, the rise in rates also made it difficult for SPACs and the companies they were acquiring to engage in creative financial engineering, vastly limiting valuation potential. Unlike their close relative, the SPAC, the PE fund story continues to unravel by the day.

According to Warren Buffet, PE funds are not perfect reflections of what they claim to be. PE funds generally leverage 3-6 times the earnings level of an acquisition and engage in precarious transactions.

High leverage

Leverage at such high levels requires stable and low-interest rates to keep the boat from shaking. Greenspan's foot – a colloquial term to refer to Alan Greenspan's (former Federal Reserve chairman) monetary policy, which consisted of low and stable interest rates – has been considered one of the primary reasons for the emergence of PE funds on a large scale. First Republic Bank, which was recently in the news for collapsing following the 2023 banking crisis, had ties with PE firms. The loan book also consisted of loans to Chamath Palihapitiya, an investor known for running SPACs. The rise in interest rates signals an increase in the real value of money and a decrease in the valuation of assets.

> Prudent investor who sticks to circle of competence and avoids risky bets will be able to purchase wonderful stocks at fair prices in the coming times

The asset now yields a lower relative return than before as the risk-free rate of return offered by government securities increases. Therefore, the rise in interest rates diminishes a PE fund's ability to go public with an entity at a desired valuation.

Moreover, with rising interest rates, the prospect of leverage becomes tricky due to mounting real and nominal costs on the debt. These, coupled with low growth and poor business prospects, reduce firms' profitability and leads to poor valuations of assets and companies. Poor valuations and business prospects do not bode well for PE firms. Thus, it is unsurprising that banks such as Silicon Valley Bank or First Republic Bank found a large part of the loan book under the risk of losses.

Furthermore, companies that went public during low-interest rates such as Zomato and Nykaa have faced severe haircuts in valuations from peak prices (losing over 50%).

Other firms which are yet to go public such as Byju's have a clear track record of employing leverage to buy out firms. The use of leverage by a start-up to acquire other start-ups does not paint an optimistic picture of the company's financial health in a rising interest-rate period. Also, , it is difficult to say whether a firm with leverage will be able to command much of a market valuation at the time of its listing.

Oyo Hotels, a start-up backed by SoftBank, was willing to reduce the number of shares sold during the IPO by about two-thirds of the original amount to facilitate listing. The desperate measures taken by technology and PE firms over the past year can be directly linked to the monetary policy executed by central banks worldwide.

No clear path

It is difficult to chart the path PE funds and start-ups will take over the next few years. However, the current macroeconomic indicators highlight turbulent times for firms benefiting from the excess financial froth brought in through the loose-monetary policy of 2020-21.

Nonetheless, the prudent investor who sticks to his circle of competence and avoids risky bets will be able to purchase wonderful stocks at fair prices in the coming times.

(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant. Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

Insuring your money

COVERNOTE

The recent bank failures in the U.S. highlight the need for our very own DICGC to raise insurance cover for bank deposits, maybe for those with a requirement and for extra premium

K. Nitya Kalyani

Buildings have been crashing in Chennai in the sharp monsoon rains, damaging property and taking lives. When banks and financial institutions crash, the impact is as tragic and the ruin more widespread.

Three banks failed in the U.S. in the last couple of months, First Republic Bank, Signature and Silicon Valley Bank. The latter, for example, shocked the start-up ecosystem since most, if not all, start-ups and venture capitalists and investors bank with it.

I talked to the promoters of a few start-ups and found those who slept peacefully even through the initial tremors were those who had deposits of $2,50,000 or less. This is the limit of coverage under The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. One promoter even said his firm limited exposure to this ceiling in each bank. Prudence did pay off for these start-ups, known basically for risk-taking! India also has an insurance scheme for bank deposits administered by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), a wholly owned arm of the RBI. Each bank depositor is insured up to ₹5,00,000 of principal and interest in one right and capacity.

That is, if you had ₹10 lakh and across SB accounts and FDs in ABC Bank, DICGC insurance covers up to ₹5 lakh. If you had, say, another ₹8 lakh in joint account with your spouse as second holder, the ₹5 lakh insurance would be available again. So, if that bank failed, you would be able to get ₹10 lakh through insurance. This would apply all over again in each bank you deal with should they fail. The deposit insurance scheme is compulsory for all commercial banks including branches of foreign banks functioning in India, local area banks and regional rural banks. All co-operative banks are also covered. The premium for this is borne entirely by the insured bank.

Spreading risks

Some of you may be old enough to remember the days when folks would have small FDs spread across different banks and branches to avoid triggering tax deduction at source on interest. That is the strategy to apply to safeguard your savings in bank deposits. Spread out the risk.

India being a high household savings economy and with the expected surge in retired population and their preferred savings avenue being safe fixed income bank deposits, there is a case for way higher DICGC insurance. Maybe it can be made available for extra premium for those who have the requirement rather than for all depositors.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh, Tenure 5 years — Loan amount 1 lakh, Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
HDFC Bank	10.50 onwards	10,747 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to Rs 4,999
Citi Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3%
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
ICICI Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	10.90-18.25	10,846-12,765	2,169-2,553	Up to 2% (Min Rs 1,000 and Max Rs 10,000)
State Bank of India	11.00-15.00	10,871-11,895	2,174-2,379	Up to 1.50% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000)
Axis Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
Bank of India	10.25-14.75	10,685-11,829	2,137-2,366	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Canara Bank	11.75-16.25	11,059-12,226	2,212-2,445	Up to 1%
Punjab National Bank	10.40-16.95	10,772-12,413	2,144-2,483	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.99-16.00	10,621-12,159	2,124-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49-14.49	10,994-11,762	2,199-2,352	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.40-15.50	10,971-12,027	2,194-2,405	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Upto 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	11.15-12.75	10,909-11,313	2,182-2,263	Up to 1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.45-12.85	11,236-11,338	2,247-2,268	Up to 1%
IDFC First Bank	10.49 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3.50%
Bank of Maharashtra	10.00-12.80	10,624-11,325	2,125-2,265	Up to 1%
Karnataka Bank	14.23	11,694	2,399	Up to 2% of loan amount (Min. Rs 2,500 & Max. Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3%

Rates and charges as on May 3 — **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

Car Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh, Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
Union Bank of India	9.30 - 10.50	10,452 - 10,747	Up to Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.75 - 9.60	10,319 - 10,525	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.85 - 12.20	10,343 - 11,173	0.50% (Rs 2,500 - Rs 10,000)
Bank of India	8.85 - 10.75	10,343 - 10,809	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 5,000)
UCO Bank	8.70 - 10.55	10,307 - 10,759	1% (Up to Rs 1,500)
State Bank of India	8.60 - 9.65	10,282 - 10,538	Up to 0.25% (Rs 375 - Rs 7,500)
IDBI Bank	8.75 - 9.90	10,319 - 10,599	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.90 - 13.00	10,355 - 11,377	0.25% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank**	10.05 onwards	10,636 onwards	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	Rs 999 - Rs 8,500
HDFC Bank	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	0.50% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	9.37 - 11.79	10,469 - 11,069	0.60% (Rs 3,000 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	11.00	10,871	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Punjab & Sind Bank	9.00-10.10	10,379 - 10,648	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)***
South Indian Bank	11.65 - 13.10	11,034 - 11,402	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)
City Union Bank	14.25 - 14.75	11,699 - 11,829	1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000)

**0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders*
***0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 750 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers. 0.20% concession to existing Housing Loan Borrowers.*
****Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.*

Rates and charges as on May 3 — **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Israel demolishes Palestinian school, drawing EU rebuke

AFP

Israeli forces demolished a Palestinian primary school in occupied West Bank, citing safety issues and drawing sharp criticism from the European Union which had funded the project. Palestinians hurled rocks at Israeli forces who fired tear gas at them as bulldozers moved in on the site at Jabbet al-Dhib village near Bethlehem. AFP

BAGHDAD

Iraq court sentences to death killer of academic Hisham al-Hashemi

REUTERS

An Iraqi court sentenced to death a former policeman convicted of killing prominent academic Hisham al-Hashemi, whose murder in 2020 sparked condemnation in Iraq and abroad. A well-respected academic and expert on jihadist groups, Hashemi was shot dead outside his Baghdad home by gunmen on motorcycles. AFP

LONDON

Leader of anti-monarchy group in U.K. freed after coronation arrest

REUTERS

The head of anti-monarchy group Republic who was arrested before a protest at King Charles III's coronation has been released from police custody. Graham Smith was one of more than 50 people held using new powers rushed into law this week by the U.K. government to crack down on protests by direct action groups. AFP

BANGKOK

Thailand citizens queue at temples and schools as early voting begins

REUTERS

Thais queued under the blistering sun outside temples, shopping centres and schools to cast their early ballots on Sunday ahead of a much-anticipated election next week. More than two million Thais nationwide are registered to vote early ahead of the kingdom's May 14 election. AFP

Japan, South Korea agree to take ties forward in a landmark regional shift

Fumio Kishida becomes the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit Seoul in 12 years; relations have been thorny over Japan's reluctance to apologise for its occupation of Korea; both countries have come together after concerns over N. Korea, China

Ananth Krishnan

Japan and South Korea on Sunday agreed to take forward ties and move past lingering historical disputes, pledging to transform a relationship that could have broad implications for the region.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Sunday became the first Japanese leader to visit Seoul in 12 years. The visit followed a trip to Japan in March by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol.

What has been dubbed "shuttle diplomacy" promises to transform ties between two U.S. allies that have been bogged down over historical issues, chiefly Japan's reluctance to apologise for atrocities committed during its occupation. Both have, however, been brought together by shared concerns not only over North Korea's nuclear programme but over China's regional muscle-flexing.

Moving forward: Fumio Kishida, left, and Yoon Suk Yeol during their meeting at the presidential office in Seoul on Sunday. REUTERS

Domestic fallout

Despite differences over Japan's wartime actions, which remain an emotive issue in South Korea and China, President Yoon has risked domestic political fallout by making a case for moving forward and arguing that while historical issues continue to be resolved, relations still needed to look to the future.

To that end, both sides in March agreed to come up with a fund to compensate South Koreans who suffered under Japanese forced labour programmes.

"For me personally, my heart hurts when I think of the many people who endured terrible suffering and grief under the difficult circumstances of the time," Mr. Kishida said on Sunday, expressing regret but stopping short of an apology, which many Koreans have been expecting.

Mr. Yoon has faced some criticism at home for moving forward on the history question without extracting more from Japan, either by way of compensation from its companies or with deeper apologies from Tokyo. Japanese leaders have themselves been wary of agreeing to either, considering their own domestic political considerations, with persisting strands of wartime denialism among some Japanese conservatives.

Under the March agreement, the compensation will be paid by a joint fund, and not, as many in South Korea had demanded, funded entirely by Japanese companies, two of which had, in 2018, faced legal action in South Korea over their record during the 1910-45 occupation. Tens of thousands of Korean women were also forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Army.

First step by Yoon

Mr. Yoon's March trip broke the ice, and took forward a rapprochement that both leaders have backed strongly. The current visit has seen both sides explore closer economic and defence ties. The Japanese leader also invited Mr. Yoon to the G-7 Summit to be hosted in Tokyo later this month, which would have been an unlikely prospect in the recent past.

Given the weight of history, however, hurdles remain. "Japanese leaders have long repeated the mantra that everything had already been settled through the 1965 deal and refused to offer a formal apology in specific terms about Japan's wartime crimes against Koreans," the *Korea Herald* said in a Sunday editorial.

Gunman kills eight persons in shopping mall in Texas

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

A heavily armed man stormed a shopping mall in the U.S. State of Texas on Saturday, shooting dead eight persons and wounding several others before he was killed by a police officer at the busy complex.

Video footage circulating online showed the shooter getting out of a sedan in the mall's parking lot before opening fire on people walking nearby.

Quick response

An officer inside on an unrelated call quickly responded to the gunfire and "neutralised" the shooter as scenes of panic broke out at the sprawling facility in Allen, the police said.

The identity of the shooter was not released. His body, sprawled on a sidewalk, was one of seven deaths at the mall when more police arrived.

Two others died in the hospital while "three are in critical surgery, and four are stable," said Allen fire chief Jonathan Boyd.

Same story: A girl runs as other shoppers leave with their hands up after police responded to a gunman at a mall in Dallas. REUTERS

The attack is the latest deadly gun violence to convulse the U.S., a country awash in firearms and which has already endured 199 mass shootings this year, according to the Gun Violence Archive, a non-governmental organisation which defines a mass shooting as four or more people wounded or killed.

The gunfire at Allen Premium Outlets, 55 kilometres north of Dallas, began around 3.30 p.m. (0200 IMT), when it was busy with weekend shoppers, the police said.

The officer in the mall "heard gunshots, went to the gunshots, engaged the suspect and neutralised the suspect," said chief Brian Harvey of the Allen police department.

Some of the victims were as young as five years old, a hospital official told NBC News.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott called the mass shooting an "unspeakable tragedy." U.S. President Joe Biden "has been briefed on the shooting," a White House official said.

Wagner to continue in Bakhmut after Russia promises enough ammunition

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

The head of the Wagner mercenary group said on Sunday that Russia had promised his fighters enough ammunition to stay in Bakhmut, after threatening to pull out in scathing videos.

Rivalries between Yevgeny Prigozhin and the conventional Army came to the surface during the battle for the eastern Ukrainian town, where Wagner is leading the assault.

It comes as Russia has reported increasing drone strikes and sabotage, amid speculation of an expected spring counteroffensive from Ukraine.

"Overnight we received a combat order... they promised to give us all the ammunition and armaments we need to continue the operations" in Bakhmut, Mr. Prigozhin said.

Ukraine's attacks

On Sunday, the Russian Army said it repelled 22 Ukrainian drones over the Black Sea.

Shortly before, authorities in Russian-annexed Crimea, surrounded by the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, said they downed more than 10 drones over the southern peninsula. The Russian security services also said they thwarted a drone attack on an airfield in the Ivanovo region.

In unanimous decision, Arab League readmits Syria after 11-year absence

Agence France-Presse
CAIRO

The Arab League on Sunday welcomed back Syria's government, ending a more than decade-long suspension and securing President Bashar al-Assad's return to the Arab fold after years of isolation.

In November 2011, the 22-member body suspended Damascus over its crackdown on peaceful protests which began earlier that year and which spiralled into a civil conflict that has killed more than 5,00,000 people, displaced millions and battered the country's infrastructure and industry.

While the front lines have mostly quietened, large parts of the country's north remain outside government control, and no political solution has yet been reached to the 12-year-old conflict.

"Government delegations from the Syrian Arab Republic will resume their participation in Arab League meetings" starting Sunday, said a unanimous decision by the group's Foreign Ministers.

The ministers emphasised their "keenness to launch a leading Arab role in efforts to resolve" the Syria crisis and its "humanitarian, and political consequences", noting that humanitarian aid must reach "all those in need".

Sport

Arsenal beats Newcastle, keeps pressure on City

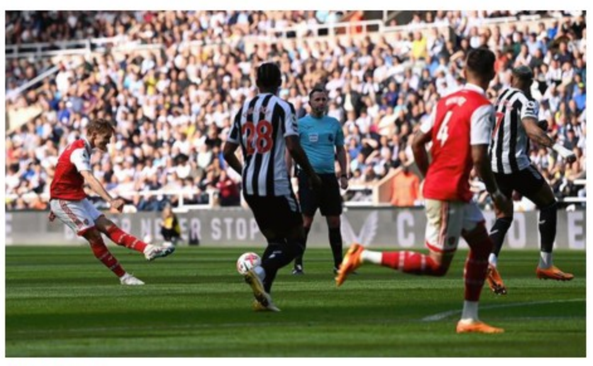
EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
NEWCASTLE

Arsenal kept the Premier League title race alive as Martin Odegaard's strike and Fabian Schar's own goal beat Newcastle 2-0 on Sunday to close to within one point of leader Manchester City.

City has a game in hand on top of its slender lead, but the Gunners are refusing to give up the fight in their hunt for a first league title in 19 years.

Newcastle's second home defeat of the season slows the Magpies' charge towards Champions League football next season.



On target: Odegaard scores Arsenal's first. GETTY IMAGES

The results: Premier League: Newcastle 0 lost to Arsenal 2 (Odegaard 14, Schar 71-og).

Serie A: Atalanta 0 lost to Juventus 2 (Iling 56, Vlahovic 90+8); Napoli 1 (Osimhen 74-pen) bt Fiorentina 0.

Bundesliga: Borussia Dortmund 6 (Adeyemi 14, 59, Haller 28, Malen 37, Bellingham 54, 86) bt Wolfsburg 0.

On Saturday: Serie A: Roma 0 lost to Inter Milan 2 (Dimarco 33, Lukaku 74).

Bundesliga: Werder Bremen 1 (Schmidt 87) lost to Bayern Munich 2 (Gnabry 62, Sane 72).

Sable, Parul break National records

Sports Bureau

Olympian Avinash Sable broke his own 5000m National record in the Sound Running Track Festival, a World Athletics Continental Tour-Silver event, at Walnut, California, USA, on Saturday.

Sable clocked 13:19.30s to better his record by more than five seconds while finishing 12th in the men's 5000m.

Meanwhile, 2019 Asian bronze medallist Parul Chaudhary's shattered 2010 Asian Games silver medallist Preeja Sreedharan's 12-year-old women's 5000m National record clocking 15:10.35s for the ninth spot.

Parul Chaudhary and Avinash Sable. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results (Indian performances only): Men: 1500 (final 2): 1. Ajay Kumar (3:39.89s). **5000m:** 12. Avinash Sable (13:19.30s NR, OR own 13:25.65, 2022). **10,000m:** Sable (did not finish). **3000m steeple chase:** 15. Shankar Lal Swami (8:42.92s). **Women: 1500m (final 2):** 4. Lili Das (4:19.87s).

Bhoria shocks Bibosinov; Hussamuddin stuns Savvin

Sports Bureau

Deepak Bhoria (51kg) shocked defending champion and Olympic bronze medallist Saken Bibosinov while Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg) ousted fourth-seeded Eduard Savvin on a mixed day for Indian pugilists at the World boxing championships in Tashkent on Sunday.

Sumit Kundu (75kg) and Narender Berwal (+92kg) lost their bouts.

In a keenly fought round-of-32 contest, Bhoria won 5-2 after a review.

Against the skilful southpaw who landed accurate straight punches from long range, Bhoria, who had upset former World and Olympic champion Shakhobidin Zoirov in 2021, delivered combinations whenever he found the Kazakh within reach. However, the Indian narrowly lost the first round (2-3).

Hit-and-move strategy

Bhoria used his hit-and-move strategy for most of the second round before Bibosinov, who had bleeding on his right eyebrow, raised the tempo to stay marginally ahead.

Bhoria battled it out in the third, connecting a few straight ones and hooks in a fast exchange of punches and went on to earn a favourable verdict.

Hussamuddin blanked Savvin 5-0 in the last-16 .

The Indian moved in and out to execute eye-catching body and head shots on the taller Russian and claimed the first round 4-1.

A range of punches helped Hussamuddin keep the gritty Russian in check and secure a 4-0 decision in the second round.

Though Savvin displayed more aggression in the third, Hussamuddin defended and countered well to stay ahead.

Sumit did his best before losing 1-3 to undefeated Russian professional boxer Pavel Sosulin in the round-of-32. Narender went down 0-5 to Cuban Fernando Arzola in the pre-quarterfinals.

WRIDDHIMAN SCHOOL

Gill eager to learn from the rich experience of 'phenomenal' Saha

Gujarat Titans opener Shubman Gill is keen to learn from the "phenomenal" Wriddhiman Saha's vast experience. "Just to be able to share his (Saha) experience... I stand next to him at slip, it is phenomenal the way he keeps going. He's been playing since the first IPL season," said Gill.

GAMEPLAN

Our intention was to take on Siraj, reveals Capitals skipper Warner

Delhi Capitals captain David Warner revealed that the team's plan was to take on Royal Challengers Bangalore pacer Mohammed Siraj. "Our intention was to take on Siraj, he's been bowling well and taking wickets early. His wickets have been bowled or leg-before wicket... so we wanted to drag his length back," said Warner.

DESIGNATED ROLE

My job was to put the opposition bowlers under pressure: Lomror

RCB batter Mahipal Lomror said his role was to disrupt the opponent's bowling attack. "My job was to try and score a boundary every over, and put the opposition bowlers under pressure. I took some risks and they paid off. I love playing on slow wickets because I get to play on the backfoot where I am quite strong," he said.

CONSOLATION WIN

Young, Latham star for the Kiwis; Iftikhar's knock goes in vain

Will Young and Tom Latham helped New Zealand defeat Pakistan by 47 runs in the final ODI in Karachi on Sunday. The hosts won 4-1. **The scores:** New Zealand 299 in 49.3 overs (Young 87, Latham 59, Chapman 43) bt Pakistan 252 in 46.1 overs (Iftikhar 94 n.o., Salman 57).

Phillips, Samad steal it for SRH from under RR's nose

Anmolpreet, Abhishek, Tripathi and Klaasen keep the chase alive before the final blow; Buttler and Samson flay Sunrisers attack to help Royals rattle up 214, but it proves inadequate

IPL-16

P.K. Ajith Kumar
JAIPUR

No sport conjures up drama the way cricket does. The reverse fixture between Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad reminded that fact to a full house at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.

It ended with SRH edging Royals off the last ball, by four wickets. Chasing what was going to be its biggest ever target, 215, the Hyderabad side needed 41 off the last two overs.

Glenn Phillips (25, 7b, 1x4, 3x6), playing only his second game of the season, tore into Kuldip Yadav, hitting him for 6,6,6,4 before falling to a brilliant running catch in the deep by Shimron Hetmyer. Twenty four came off the over.

Now 17 was needed from the last over, which was given to Sandeep Sharma. Abdul Samad hit the second ball for a six, beating a great effort on the boundary by Joe Root, on his IPL debut.

It came down to five off the last ball. Samad was caught at long-off, but it proved to be a no-ball – a big one that – and he smashed the free-hit over the head of the bowler to take Sunrisers to one of its greatest wins.

Game-changer: Phillips' seven-ball 25 turned the match on its head and paved the way for Sunrisers' last-ball win. SPORTZPICS/IPL

There were fine contributions to the remarkable chase from Anmolpreet Singh (33, 25b, 4x4, 1x6), Abhishek Sharma (55, 34b, 5x4, 2x6), Rahul Tripathi (47, 29b, 2x4, 3x6) and Heinrich Klaasen (26, 12b, 2x4, 2x6). Three of them were dismissed by Yuzvendra Chahal (4/29).

Earlier, the Royals innings was built around a superb 95 off 59 balls (10x4, 4x6) from Jos Buttler, who returned to form. Skipper Sanju Samson (66, 38b, 4x4, 5x6) was also back amongst the runs, and they added 138 for the second wicket off just 81 balls. There was another impressive knock from Yashasvi Jaiswal (35, 18b, 5x4, 2x6), too. Not many would have imagined the imposing Royals total would be chased down in such dramatic fashion.

Twist in the tale

41 runs needed off 12 deliveries

19th over

6	6	6	4	W	2

Batters: Phillips and Jansen; **Bowler:** Kuldip

17 required from six balls

20th over

2	6	2	1	1	nb	6

Batters: Samad and Jansen; **Bowler:** Sandeep

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Gujarat Titans	11	8	3	0	16	0.951
Chennai Super Kings	11	6	4	1	13	0.409
Lucknow Super Giants	11	5	5	1	11	0.294
Rajasthan Royals	11	5	6	0	10	0.388
Royal Challengers	10	5	5	0	10	-0.209
Mumbai Indians	10	5	5	0	10	-0.454
Punjab Kings	10	5	5	0	10	-0.472
Kolkata Knight Riders	10	4	6	0	8	-0.103
Sunrisers Hyderabad	10	4	6	0	8	-0.472
Delhi Capitals	10	4	6	0	8	-0.529

*After the RR-SRH match on May 7

Next assignment

RR: May 11 vs. **KKR**
Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: May 13 vs. **LSG**
Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Natarajan b Jansen 35 *(18b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Jos Buttler lbw b Bhuvneshwar 95 *(59b, 10x4, 4x6)*, Sanju Samson (not out) 66 *(38b, 4x4, 5x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 7 *(5b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-5, w-5): 11; Total (for two wkts. in 20 overs): 214.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-54 (Jaiswal, 4.6 overs), 2-192 (Buttler, 18.3).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 4-0-44-1, Jansen 4-0-44-1, Natarajan 4-0-36-0, Markande 4-0-51-0, Abhishek 2-0-15-0, Vivrant 2-0-18-0.

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Anmolpreet Singh **(Impact Player in place of Natarajan)** c Hetmyer b Chahal 33 *(25b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Abhishek Sharma c Chahal b R. Ashwin 55 *(34b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Rahul Tripathi c Jaiswal b Chahal 47 *(29b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Heinrich Klaasen c Buttler b Chahal 26 *(12b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Aiden Markram lbw b Chahal 6 *(5b, 1x4)*, Glenn Phillips c Hetmyer b Kuldip 25 *(7b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Abdul Samad (not out) 17 *(7b, 2x6)*, Marco Jansen (not out) 3 *(2b)*; Extras (w-4, nb-1): 5; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 217.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-51 (Anmolpreet, 5.5), 2-116 (Abhishek, 12.4), 3-157 (Klaasen, 15.5), 4-171 (Tripathi, 17.2), 5-174 (Markram, 17.5), 6-196 (Phillips, 18.5).

ROYALS BOWLING
Sandeep 4-0-48-0, Kuldip 4-0-50-1, R. Ashwin 4-0-35-1, Chahal 4-0-29-4, M. Ashwin 3-0-42-0, McCoy **(Impact Player in place of R. Ashwin)** 1-0-13-0.
Toss: Royals; **PoM:** Phillips.
Sunrisers won by four wickets off the final delivery.

Gill and Saha make merry as Gujarat Titans strides towards a playoffs spot in style

Shayan Acharya
AHMEDABAD

Wriddhiman Saha and Shubman Gill made batting look easy on a Narendra Modi Stadium surface that appeared dry, with the odd ball stopping.

Braving the sweltering conditions on Sunday, the openers galloped to a 142-run stand to guide Gujarat Titans for 227 for two – the fourth highest total this season – and eventually paved the way for the team's 56-run win over Lucknow Super Giants in an IPL fixture.

The Lucknow outfit, which won the toss and put Titans in, had no respite despite deploying eight bowlers into the attack as boundaries flowed in the PowerPlay and Saha (81, 43b, 10x4, 4x6) reached his half-century in just 20 deliveries.

The seasoned campaigner rode on his experience and hammered Mohsin Khan for a couple of fours and followed it up with a six and a four off Avesh Khan in the first two overs. He continued with his assault in Mohsin's next over and eventually brought up his first fifty of the season with a six off Yash Thakur.

Soaring high: Gill and Saha toyed with the Super Giants bowling during their 142-run opening partnership. VIJAY SONEJI

Titans bettered their overall record of most runs in the PowerPlay, with 78 in six overs. Gill (94 n.o., 51b, 2x4, 7x6) looked subdued initially, but soon upped the rate and made life difficult for the LSG bowlers.

Dealing in fours and sixes, Saha looked set for a century when substitute Prerak Mankad took a sharp catch at deep mid-wicket off Avesh. Gill stood firm and forged two stands – 42 with captain Hardik Pandya and 43 with David Miller. Towards the end, Gill mistimed a few shots and missed out on a hundred.

Chasing a tall total, LSG openers Quinton de Kock (70, 41b, 7x4, 3x6) and Kyle Mayers (48, 32b, 7x4, 2x6) added 88. From 72 for no loss in the PowerPlay, it lost the plot as Mohit Sharma (four for 29) earned a breakthrough, with Rashid taking a screamer to dismiss Mayers.

LSG's run-flow dried up thereafter. Playing in his first game, de Kock tried to turn things around before falling to Rashid, but the middle-order was once again exposed.

Surprisingly, captain Krunal Pandya did not elevate himself and backed Deepak Hooda and Ayush Badoni, but with Mohit breathing fire, they couldn't make an impact and the side could only manage 171 for seven.

Hardik won the battle of the Pandya brothers as Titans (16 points) inched closer to the playoffs.

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT TITANS
Wriddhiman Saha c sub (Prerak) b Avesh 81 *(43b, 10x4, 4x6)*, Shubman Gill (not out) 94 *(51b, 2x4, 7x6)*, Hardik Pandya c Krunal b Mohsin 25 *(15b, 1x4, 2x6)*, David Miller (not out) 21 *(12b, 2x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-4): 6; Total (for two wkts. in 20 overs): 227.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-142 (Saha, 12.1 overs), 2-184 (Hardik, 15.6).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Mohsin 3-0-42-1, Avesh 4-0-34-1, Krunal 4-0-38-0, Yash Thakur 4-0-48-0, Bishnoi 2-0-21-0, Mayers 1-0-16-0, Swapnil 1-0-7-0, Stoinis 1-0-20-0.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Kyle Mayers c Rashid b Mohit 48 *(32b, 7x4, 2x6)*, Quinton de Kock b Rashid 70 *(41b, 7x4, 3x6)*, Deepak Hooda c Tewatia b Shami 11 *(11b)*, Marcus Stoinis c Shami b Mohit 4 *(9b)*, Nicholas Pooran c Shami b Noor 3 *(6b)*, Ayush Badoni **(Impact Player in place of Yash Thakur)** c Noor b Mohit 21 *(11b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Swapnil Singh (not out) 2 *(4b)*, Krunal Pandya c Miller b Mohit 0 *(1b)*, Ravi Bishnoi (not out) 4 *(5b, 1x4)*; Extras (lb-3, w-5): 8; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 171.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-88 (Mayers, 8.2), 2-114 (Hooda, 12.2), 3-130 (Stoinis, 14.5), 4-140 (de Kock, 15.6), 5-153 (Pooran, 17.2), 6-166 (Badoni, 18.5), 7-166 (Krunal, 18.6).

TITANS BOWLING
Shami 4-0-37-1, Hardik 3-0-37-0, Rashid 4-0-34-1, Noor 4-0-26-1, Mohit 4-0-29-4, Joseph **(Impact Player in place of Gill)** 1-0-5-0.
Toss: Super Giants; **PoM:** Gill.
Titans won by 56 runs.

Next assignment

GT: May 12 vs. **MI**
Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

LSG: May 13 vs. **SRH**
Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.

Knight Riders host Kings in a battle of survival

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Two-time champion Kolkata Knight Riders will be looking to keep its winning form intact when it takes on Punjab Kings in a virtual battle of survival in an IPL-16 fixture at the Eden Gardens here on Monday. Having won a close battle against Sunrisers' Hyderabad in the previous outing, KKR will be keen to use it as an inspiration to maintain the momentum at home.

Both the sides are staring at a possible elimination and would be looking to collect the points to keep their chances alive. Punjab Kings is in a better situation considering its two-point advantage in the league table leaving the host with the job of catching up. Punjab Kings has 10 points from as many matches and is placed seventh in the table while KKR is situated a rung below with eight points from its 10 outings.

KKR captain Nitish Rana will have to find out the right combination that could sustain the team's winning rhythm. Wins have been an occasional chapter in KKR's progress so far as the team managed to win two at home and twice as a visitor to slide down to the eighth spot. With just four matches remaining in the league phase, KKR's coach Chandrakant Pandit will have to find out the right recipe that would help the side find success more consistently. Punjab Kings under the leadership of Shikhar Dhawan will also be coming out hard as it looks to regain the form after losing its previous match against Mumbai Indians.

Big responsibility: Skipper Dhawan will look to make his presence felt in the crucial game for PBKS. K.R. DEEPAK

TODAY'S MATCH

Kolkata Knight Riders vs. Punjab Kings

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: **31**
KKR 20 | PBKS 11

PREVIOUS MEETING
PBKS won by seven runs (DLS method), 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA APP

M BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Aryna Sabalenka reclaims Madrid Open crown

World No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka played a superb attacking game to beat top-ranked Iga Swiatek 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 and win the Madrid Open for the second time on Saturday.

Other result: On Friday: Men: Semifinal: Struff bt Karatsev 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Rodrygo double ends Real's wait for Copa del Rey title

Rodrygo scored twice to lead Real Madrid to its first Copa del Rey title in nearly a decade after a 2-1 victory over Osasuna in the final on Saturday.

The result: Real Madrid 2 (Rodrygo 2, 70) bt Osasuna 1 (Torro 58).

Perez wins pole position, continues chasing Verstappen

Sergio Perez will start from the pole at the Miami Grand Prix, where he has been given clearance to race for both the win and the championship. Perez trails Red Bull teammate Max Verstappen by just six points in the championship standings and team boss Christian Horner vowed in Miami to allow the drivers to race for the title. Verstappen, the two-time reigning F1 champion, and Perez each have two wins this year.

LIVE TELECAST

NBA: MTV, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 5.30 a.m.

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 10 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

Premier League: SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Jeremy wins silver in snatch

Sports Bureau

Returning to competition after his Birmingham Commonwealth Games victory, Jeremy Lalrinnunga disappointed by recording three 'no lifts' in clean and jerk and failing to register a total in men's 67kg category at the Asian weightlifting championships in Jinju on Sunday. Jeremy achieved 137kg in his second effort and 141kg in the third to take the second position after the first segment. Jeremy equalled his personal best in snatch, achieved in December 2021.

However, Jeremy, who had an eight-month layoff due to an elbow injury, faltered in clean and jerk, wasting two attempts for 165kg and one for 168kg.

"Jeremy's snatch was good. But he lacked confidence during clean and jerk. It happens when you return after a long gap," said chief coach Vijay Sharma.

Praveen breaks National record at meet in Cuba

The triple jumper qualifies for the World Championships to be held in Budapest in August; unclear whether AFI will ratify the record since there is no word if a dope test was conducted in Havana

ATHLETICS

Stan Rayan
KOCHI

With the country's top triple jumpers in great form last year, three months ago triple jumper Praveen Chithravel predicted that the National record could fall early this season.

In 2016 when Renjith Maheswary broke the National record, raising it to 17.30m in Bengaluru a month before the Rio Olympics, many rubbed their eyes in disbelief.

But Chithravel spoke of much bigger things in a chat with this writer from his training base, the JSW Inspire Institute of Sport, in Ballari in February.

Praveen Chithravel.
FILE PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ

"The goal is to do more than 17.40m this year. I need to jump something like 17.40 or 17.50m, that sort of process is going on and it's going good," Chithravel, the Asian indoor silver medallist, had told *The Hindu* then.

The 21-year-old walked the talk in Cuba on Saturday, breaking the National record comfortably at the Prueba de Confrontacion athletics meet in Havana with a gold-winning 17.37m. The Tamil Nadu youngster had three jumps over 17m (17.14 first jump, 17.07 fourth, 17.37 fifth) during that stunning series that saw him climb a rung, to second, in triple jump's World list this year. That also saw Chithravel qualify (qualification standard 17.20m) for the World Championships in Budapest in August.

With Selva Prabhu Thirumaran – the Tamil Nadu youngster had won the under-20 Worlds silver medal in Colombia last year – finishing fourth with a personal best 16.59m, improving his previous best by 44cm, it was a nice day for Indian athletics. However, Asian Games champion Arpinder Singh had a disappointing 15.03m and finished sixth in the same event.

It was not clear whether Chithravel went through a dope test, an Athletics Federation of India criterion to ratify national records, after his Saturday stunner.

"We normally approve a record only after a dope test. Whether they had a dope control (in the Havana meet), I will have to collect all those details," National chief coach Radhakrishnan Nair told *The Hindu* on Sunday afternoon. "We also had national records in the men's and women's 5000m (Avinash Sable and Parul Chaudhary at the Sound Running Track Fest in California, a World Athletics Continental Tour-Silver event). There, dope test was done."

India seeded second in junior Davis Cup

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Indian boys have been seeded No. 2 and clubbed with Japan, Iran and Indonesia in the league phase of the Asia-Oceania Junior Davis Cup under-16 tennis tournament to be played in Shymkent, Kazakhstan, from Monday.

Kriish Tyagi, Aarjun Pandit and Rethin Pranav will try to earn one of the four spots from the region for the World Group competition. Kriish was part of the team last year but the other two are making their debut. Experienced coach Sajid Lodi will also guide the team as the captain.

The groups: Pool-A: Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong. **Pool-B:** India, Iran, Indonesia, Japan. **Pool-C:** Australia, Pakistan, Vietnam, Thailand. **Pool-D:** Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Uzbekistan, Chinese Taipei.

Srikanth, Ashmita make Asian Games squad

BADMINTON TRIALS

Sports Bureau
HYDERABAD

Former World No. 1 K. Srikanth and Ashmita Chaliha topped the men's and women's singles at the badminton selection trials here on Sunday to qualify for the Asian Games. The two will join double Olympics medallist P.V. Sindhu and H.S. Prannoy for the individual competitions.

The men's doubles category was the most keenly fought contest.

The squad: Men: Singles: H.S. Prannoy, K. Srikanth (individual /team), Lakshya Sen and Mithun Manjunath (team). **Doubles:** R. Satwiksairaj & Chirag Shetty, Dhruv Kapila & M.R. Arjun (individual and team).

Women: Singles: P.V. Sindhu, Ashmita Chaliha (individual /team), Anupama Upadhyaya, Malvika Bansod (team). **Doubles:** P. Gayathri & Tressa Jolly, Ashwini Ponnappa & Tanisha Crasto (individual/team).

Mixed doubles: Rohan Kapoor & N. Sikki Reddy, K. Sai Pratheek & Tanisha Crasto.

Keenly fought: Arjun-Dhruv made the men's doubles squad on better game-difference as all the pairs ended with two wins each. AP

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Akshaj shines

Akshaj Kathuria (29 and 4/13) helped PESCA defeat CCE in the Tiger Cup under-14 tournament here.

The scores: DPS (East) 148/8 in 30 overs (Arush Jain 52, S. Shahan 28) bt Kreeda Kshetra 122 in 29.4 overs.

PESCA 149/5 in 30 overs (Krishna Kumar 40, Akshaj Kathuria 29) bt CCE 66 in 21.3 overs (Akshaj Kathuria 4/13, Faheem 4/13).

Advani reigns

Pankaj Advani defeated Sourav Kothari 68-15, 13-134, 77-5, 8-76, 68-17, 68-17, 68-38, 134-0, 75-8 in the final to emerge as the Bangalore Snooker Academy tournament champion.

Kickstart thrashes Queens

Kickstart FC whipped Queens FC 5-0 in the group stage match of the Indian Women's League football tournament at Ahmedabad.

The result: Kickstart FC 5 (Kioko Elizabeth 33, Devneta Roy 35, Bibicha Devi 43, Renuka Nagarkote 52, Saru Limbu 66) bt Queens FC 0.

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